# Settlement, economy and lifestyle:

## The changing social identities of the coastal settlements of West Norfolk, 450-1100 AD.

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Thesis submitted to the University of Nottingham for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Department of Archaeology, School of Humanities.

September 2010

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**Acknowledgments**.

A huge number of people helped me during this thesis. Most importantly, I would like to thank Dr. Chris Loveluck, my university supervisor, and Dr Andrew Rogerson, my 'Norfolk' supervisor, for their excellent guidance.

Being a thesis that involved undertaking new fieldwork, this project really would not have happened without the help in kind of the following people, who either gave me direct help or actively helped fieldwork to happen: John Nathan Page, Jake Thornton, Louise Evans, Ruth Creasey, Beth Foster, Emma Whitaker, Dave Rutterford, Ed Oakley, Terry Baxter, Kelvin Smith, John and Pat Wells, Dave Hibbet, Angie Hibbet, John Goree, Matt Hobson, John Boothroyd, Sophie Cabot, Sedgeford Volunteers, John Boothroyd, Holly Holman, Gary Rossin, Rik Hoggett, John Ames, Roger Greaves, Ann Smith, Val Fryer, Naomi Payne, Megan Dennis, Kris Poole, Quita Mould, Neil Faulkner, David Whitmore, Jayne Bown and the Norfolk Archaeological Unit, Barry Mears.

The following people helped me greatly with their academic or specialist knowledge: Chris Loveluck, Andy Hutcheson, Rik Hoggett, Brian Ayers, Andrew Rogerson, Tim Pestell, Alice Cattermole, Erica Darch, Paul Blinkhorn, Naomi Payne, Sophie Cabot, Pieterjan Deckers, Kris Poole, Ed Oakley, John Smallwood, Brian Ayers. The following people helped with proofing: Jane Cabot, Sophie Cabot, Jane Cabot, Jeff Davies, Jane Davies, Daryn Reyman, Rebecca Reynolds, Katy Soar.

Thanks are also extended to the tenants and landowners of the case-study sites, in particular Jamie Symington at Wormegay, Professor Bernard and Susan Campbell at Sedgeford, Mr Stillgoe at Burnham and Jonathon Cave at West Rudham.

Throughout the work on this thesis, my parents Jane and Jeff Davies and my brother Al have been nothing but supportive and I would like to thank them and, in the later stages, Jenny Goulding, for their continuing help.

# Chapter 1: Introduction

## Overall aims and research context

The aim of this thesis is to explore social transformations in England, between c.450 and 1100 AD, by using detailed case studies of rural settlement remains within a sub-region; coastal West Norfolk (**Fig.1**), and to construct a systematic narrative of their development. The archaeological evidence for analysis is mainly composed of portable cultural material from rural settlements, combined with surveyed and excavated evidence of their morphology. Multiple and superimposed forms of evidence will be used to analyse the diversity of rural settlements and the material expressions of social and economic change in this period and to challenge existing models.

This study is necessary as, until recently, many seminal models of early medieval settlements and social change have given primacy to the economic transformations seen at proto-urban *emporia*, which emerge from the later Seventh century, and which, it is suggested, were controlled by royal elites (Hodges, 1982, 197). Within these models, rural settlements, and particularly their trade and exchange lifestyles, have often been portrayed as 'conservative, autarkic peripheries' (Moreland, 2000b, 69) that did not drive social change. Yet the period under consideration, 450 – 1100 AD, is clearly a crucial formative time during which a number of major economic, social and political transformations took place, with regions transformed from elusive pagan societies into complex Christian societies. It seems likely that rural settlements and their populations played a more important role in these transformations.

Instead, this thesis proposes that as an 'investment in this life' (Carver, 2002, 132), we should expect rural settlements, now found with increasing frequency in many parts of Europe (McCormick, 2001, 1), and the discarded items of material culture

from them, to be equally indicative of various aspects of dynamically changing 'lifestyles'; especially trade and exchange activities. Furthermore, if approached correctly, this evidence might not only reflect important social transformations but also allow us to demonstrate that rural settlements (including settlements in coastal zones) and those who controlled and interacted with them were equally important actors who drove social change (Moreland, 2000a, 69-104). This idea sits more comfortably with recent perspectives offered by early medieval historians, who have emphasised the diverse nature of both emerging elites and mercantile classes in the rural landscape of Carolingian Europe (Verhulst, 2002).

At the core of this analysis, then, lies the question: to what extent were people's economic lives, as reflected in the material remains of lifestyles, a factor (perhaps even the main identifying factor) in the creation and reproduction of social affiliations and identities?

However, in order to address this question there are a number of theoretical themes and practical problems that need to be addressed and central to this is the realisation that 'we begin to define past societies from the point that we choose to look at them' (Renfrew 1977, 94-95). Essentially, where settlement evidence and associated material culture is concerned, practice and theory are intrinsically linked, and the way that we design our research into the evidence is crucial to the answers that we ultimately obtain. This will become particularly apparent when we dicuss a number of unexcavated early medieval sites of trade and exchange found by the use of metal detectors and labelled 'productive' sites where unsystematic work may have led to premature conclusions.

A crucial methodological aspect of this thesis, therefore, is to attempt interpretation of the role and function of some probably important West Norfolk rural sites labelled 'productive'. Our solution is to present detailed field-survey case-studies against the wider backdrop of the regional distribution of settlements and portable material culture in West Norfolk. This seems sensible as, without a contextual study of material culture circulation within wider regional settlement hierarchies

(Ulmschneider 2000b and Palmer 2003, 48–60) it is impossible to estimate how exceptional was the circulation of material culture at those rural sites involved in trade and exchange. This leads to a final problem, introduced below, of how best to investigate, interpret and compare unsystematically investigated rural sites that are often represented only by assemblages of surface finds.

## Specific aims: research themes to be addressed

The conceptual influences pertaining to this research can be broken down into two broad but inter-linked areas. Firstly, we must define an appropriate conceptual framework, building on past theoretical models, which will allow us to define and then explore changing *social identities* using archaeological data. Secondly, we must find an approach and method of investigation that moves beyond some of the older archaeological approaches to early medieval economies, a central concern of many earlier studies of social change in early medieval Europe. A key theme to be considered here is how to identify social identities and emergent social hierarchies in rural contexts using the material remains of lifestyles. Within this, care must be paid to archaeological signatures that are particular to coastal landscapes or specific historical contexts.

### Social Identities

This thesis needs to define and understand how material remains of lifestyles might relate to, or even contribute towards, social identities – people's sense of belonging (Diaz-Andreu and Lucy, 2005, 1). Patterns within material culture might then be investigated to identify various actors at settlements and perhaps identify different social identities and social groups. This will allow us to interpret wider social transformations in Anglo-Saxon society over time, in particular the development of social stratification.

In recent research, the recovery of social identities via an interpretation of archaeological material has become a core topic (e.g. Insoll, 2007). In archaeology, this has mostly consisted of an adaption of the contextual frameworks provided by sociologists such as Bourdieu (1977, 1990) and Giddens (1979, 1984). The concepts of agency and *habitus*, for example, have now provided archaeologists with a conceptual 'toolkit' for self-reflexive analysis of individual and collective expressions of social identity. Agency theory has become essentially the base for analysis of the cultural background and societal principles that might structure the actions of an individual or community (Johnson, 2007, 142). Studies that have applied *agency* theory to archaeological subjects have explored diverse topics such as status and ethnicity (e.g. Meskell, 2007; Jones, 1997, 2007). However, agency in status and ethnicity are infrequently used to explore early medieval contexts and socio-economic transformations over time. Yet, where this has occurred, for example in relation to portable material culture and Anglo-Scandinavian identity, there is an increasing realisation that observed patterns might reflect highly nuanced and localised expressions of nested social identities (Hakenbeck, 2007, 23-27). It is hoped that these nuanced patterns might also be observable via variations in settlement morphologies over time, and Reynolds' work on Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon settlement variability (2003) has started this process.

**The Nature of Economy and Emergence of Elites**

Economic themes have been extensively explored in archaeological approaches towards early medieval Europe. A number of scholars have seen transformations in the nature of economies as the main impetus for social change. A key contribution is the work of Richard Hodges. As Chapter 2 will discuss, Hodges (1982) was a substantivist. A key element of substantivist thinking is that in certain modes of economy (particularly pre-modern non-capitalist societies) economic lives are intrinsically linked to the development of social identities.

Hodges, drawing on anthropological thinking, suggested that societal developments were focussed around the *emporia* between the Seventh and Ninth centuries. These institutions developed due to royal desires to control long-distance trade and exchange in 'luxury goods' such as glass, gold and silver artefacts (Palmer, 2003, 48-60), despite earlier models painting a less controlled picture of trade and exchange (Pirenne, 1925, 1939). Yet, a common element within this spectrum of past thinking is the fact that 'economic life' is characterised by the involvement of societal groups in trade and exchange. For Hodges, royal control of access to and consumption of luxuries created contrasting social identities. These approaches have perhaps resulted in over-concentration on the circulation of perceived 'luxuries' at the expense of other less visible, but perhaps equally important, aspects of social lives like production and consumption (Saunders, 2001, 8).

There are now increasing indications that patterns of production and consumption are highly varied, both chronologically and spatially, in rural areas. It is now argued that 'rural centres' might emerge contemporaneously with the *emporia* in coastal zones or close to important communication routes and then co-exist economically with them *(*Hamerow, 2002, 156). These observations make it increasingly hard to accept that the circulation of material culture was controlled by a single well defined or documented social group, allowing for the possibility that other systems of trade and exchange (and therefore social identities) might have been in existence in addition to those surrounding the elite-controlled *emporia*. For example, coastal regions and settlements might now be regarded as having very particular patterns of production and consumption characterised by ease of access to perceived 'luxuries' (Loveluck and Tys, 2006, Loveluck, 2010/11).

Once we upset this monopolistic model, we must find new questions for settlement foundation and development. For example, in coastal situations sites/settlements involved in trade and exchange may have been initiated and controlled by royal estates, or they could have been an entrepreneurial response to the pre-existence of a variety of estate centres. In this sort of doubt, it then becomes important to ask questions such as; to what extent did people define their identity by economic role?

There are obviously other societal structures like kin and ethnicity but is economics the meta-structure? Might we also have complex transformations in the role of the economy in social identities over time? Perhaps we cannot separate economy and identity in socially embedded exchange societies although we can in commercial societies.

However, much more fundamentally, the ability of archaeologists to shift the balance of interpretative emphasis from *emporia* to hinterland, as is now requested by many (Whyman, 2002), is inhibited by a number of practical problems concerning approaches to the exploration and analysis of rural settlements. Until recent decades, for example, there simply were not many Anglo-Saxon settlements, either rural or (proto-) urban, from which to analyse the lifestyles of social groups and reappraise the workings of early medieval economy and society.

**Approaches to the analysis of rural settlement**

Subsequent to Hodges (1982) a huge amount of data has been recovered. As more excavation and field survey takes place, archaeologists are constantly refining interpretations concerning the complexities of settlement density, hierarchy and patterns of production and consumption in rural and coastal areas. In particular, excavations and surveys have now discovered a variety of undocumented rural settlements in receipt of traded goods or engaged in manufacture — activities previously regarded as almost exclusive to the *emporia* — in many regions across North Sea Europe (McCormick, 2001, 1). Accordingly, Hodges has now adjusted his *emporia* model to flag-up the importance of rural sites and regions, although the key rural sites are still characterised as controlled by discrete elite groups (Hodges, 2006, 16). For Hodges, the *emporia* still provide the impetus for rural growth, acting as a short lived phase of command economy under royal control, with distinctive features in comparison to rural hinterlands, such as planned settlement layouts and churches (Hodges, 2008, 113-118).

However, it is a fundamental argument of this thesis that, in order to understand the dynamics of rural settlements and social change, we must have better analysis of settlements themselves. As Chapters 2 and 3 will demonstrate, where integrated studies of full material culture profiles, including settlement morphologies themselves, are combined with an additional study of material culture patterns in the landscape (Chapter 3) it is possible to make a number of interesting observations. A pertinent example is the Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon high status rural settlement at Flixborough, N. Lincs (Loveluck, 2007b).

At Flixborough, detailed stratigraphic analysis of a superimposed settlement sequence was able to match key transformations in material culture use and discard over time with contrasting land-use phases within the settlement. As a result, the evidence of 'lifestyles' from remains of food consumption (animal bones) to craft-working (e.g. spindle whorls) and clothing (dress accessories), could be used to characterise the settlement over time (Loveluck, 2007b, 157-163). This was then compared to patterns of material culture use on a regional and national basis. As a result, the interpretation of the site was able to move away from historically defined ('textually-led', Loveluck, 2007a) and perhaps inappropriate definitions of undocumented sites (manor, monastery and perhaps also *emporia*), and actually start to interpret settlements by looking at the *range* and frequency of evidenced activities. Crucially, this method allowed for different social groups – both ecclesiastical and secular - to be identified and interpreted wholly through material remains, providing an insight into the diversity of the rural settlement hierarchy and how it might have transformed over time. As a result of projects like Flixborough, future work might now attempt to demonstrate how detailed cross-site patterns of production and consumption reflect common or contrasting social themes within the wider context of Anglo-Saxon England or coastal North Sea Europe.

**'Productive' sites**

The interpretative method employed at Flixborough represents something of an ideal case-study. Unfortunately, many other rural sites, in particular those sites

involved in trade/exchange represented by surface finds alone, have not all had such rigorous methodologies applied to them. For example, many surveyed sites have been located but not placed within wider interpretative frameworks (Witton, Norfolk, Lawson, 1983). Many other unsystematically identified sites, often represented solely by metal detector finds and labelled as 'productive' sites (Pestell and Ulmschneider, 2003) may have been over interpreted in advance of detailed investigation. The term 'productive' site, is a label originally given by numismatists to metal detected sites that *produced* a lot of coins and metalwork during survey; no reference to *production* is intended (Ulmschneider and Pestell, 2003).

The central problem with current approaches to 'productive' sites is that, despite a lack of exploration, the common trade and exchange aspects of these sites have frequently been used to characterise them as a coherent group. As a result, many sites are generally regarded as declining by the Ninth century once abundant coin loss ends (Metcalf, 2003), before we know whether or not the sites might equate to permanent settlements, whether any additional aspects of lifestyles of social relations are represented at any given activity focus (e.g. production) or whether this changed over time. Many scholars are unhappy about this, suggesting that the only common thing about the 'productive' sites is their method of recovery (Richards, 1999). Yet, because of their limited investigation, many 'productive' sites (including those in West Norfolk) cannot yet be used to reappraise socio-economic models.

An important theoretical and methodological point for this thesis is that, to discuss the key economic, social and political transformations in rural areas, we first need to carry out detailed work at individual 'productive' sites in order to appreciate the diversity and complexity of this evidence. A review of approaches to the sampling of material culture profiles and settlement morphologies, and how this might be used to investigate social identities, is provided in Chapter 2. It is also argued that a conclusion can be reached only by interrogating material culture use (the evidence of lifestyle) at individual case-studies against the wider circulation of regional distributions of material culture. This is undertaken for West Norfolk in Chapter 3.

## Introducing the West Norfolk Study area

Before moving onto more detailed considerations of identities, economy and settlement it is important to introduce the study area for this thesis.

West Norfolk is a sub-region of diverse landscape zones, from low-lying fenland to upland (**Fig. 2**). The most extensive soil landscape is the easily tillable, mixed sandy soils at the base of a north-south aligned chalk escarpment, known as the Greensands (Funnell, 1976). This is an important zone for settlement from the Iron Age onwards (Rogerson, 1993, 38) containing, for example, an important prehistoric north to south aligned routeway, the Icknield Way (Rainbird-Clarke, 1960) and a series of Romano-British villa estate centres that provide a pre-existing context for later settlement. This landscape zone is sandwiched between low-lying fenland to the west and clay uplands in the east, bisected by navigable rivers that run west from a central eastern watershed to the western and northern coasts (Williamson, 1993, 16, Fig. 1.3; see **Fig.3**). Following the Roman period, the Fenland is traditionally considered a marginal, unmanaged, landscape until the Eighth century (Silvester, 1988, Rippon, 2000, 185), with the Saxon coastline lying at around the 5m AOD contour (Hall and Coles, 1994, 122). The lighter soils east of the western escarpment, known as the Goodsands (Corbett and Dent, 1993, 18-19), were predominately used for sheep and corn in later medieval times (Williamson, 2003, 79-81). For the purposes of this thesis West Norfolk is defined as the modern governmental administrative district of Kings Lynn and West Norfolk. This comprises 27% of the modern county of Norfolk and includes 102 civil parishes, three complete Domesday hundreds and parts of a further three (Rogerson, 2003, 110).

Researchers in Norfolk attempting to tackle the issues pertaining to this thesis are particularly fortunate in that geographical conditions favourable to dense early medieval settlement have combined with modern-day arable production (where deep ploughing produces abundant surface finds) and a strong tradition of reporting surface-finds to the Norfolk Historic Environment Record office (hereafter NHER). This provides an unparalleled corpus of surface artefact finds which, although

unstratified, appear now to be representative, providing indications that, as time progressed, there was an increase in settlement and human exploitation of all rural landscape zones (Dymond, 1985).

East Anglia is also particularly fortuitous in that its Anglo-Saxon and Anglo-Scandinavian populations often had lifestyles that utilised highly diagnostic material culture, including pottery, coinage and metalwork. For example, the use of metal detectors by Norfolk amateurs since the 1980s has identified a number of materially rich rural 'sites' dating from, at the latest, the Seventh century AD onwards. Six of these materially rich 'productive' sites, have been located in West Norfolk (Rogerson, 2003). However, as noted above, on a national scale the interpretation of these sites is currently hampered by inconsistent theoretical approaches and a lack of detailed investigation. Overcoming this problem in West Norfolk is crucial to this thesis, particularly as new discoveries already hint that the datasets might allow for changes in the patterns of trade, exchange, social affiliation and social relations - all important constituent parts of what we might term 'social identities' - to be narrated over time.

Finally, if we accept that the distinctive economies and societies of Norfolk relate, in part, to the geographical structure of the county (Williamson, 1993, 7), then this varied sub-region should allow for a diverse range of settlement evidence to be observed. In addition, despite being densely settled, West Norfolk is also a relatively large area that remained unurbanised until the Twelfth century (Atkin, 1985). This means that – *contra* the *emporia*-centred models - a diverse range of rural sites might have performed the functions of an absent urban focus (Rogerson, 2003, 120, Hutcheson, 2006, 75-77).

## Conclusion: Thesis structure and summary of approaches and method

This thesis aims to use the material evidence of lifestyle to discuss the diverse and complex development of rural settlements and society in West Norfolk, and to place this development in a wider context for the years between 450 and 1100 AD.

The above introduction has touched upon some of the important specific research themes that this thesis will have to tackle. However, before progressing with a study applied explicitly to early medieval west Norfolk, we must first look in more detail at earlier conceptual influences and approaches to social identities, economies and settlements. This is undertaken in Chapter 2.

Armed with a theoretical position and investigative rationale, Chapter 3 applies new interpretations to observed distributions of material culture (primarily surface artefact finds) and settlement evidence in Norfolk and West Norfolk, and reviews past and current approaches to their analysis and interpretation. This regional analysis collates unpublished HER data and looks at distributions of various data sets, particularly coinage, metalwork and pottery including evidence of production and excavated settlements themselves. The core aim is to provide a satisfactory research context for the more detailed case-studies, providing a perspective on the regional circulation of materials and developing settlement sequences which will help with the interpretation of the case-study sites (Chapters 5-11).

Having highlighted the key regional themes, Chapter 4 then sets out a detailed methodology. This includes a justification for the definition and investigation of seven detailed case-studies that will highlight the diversity, complexity and changing lifestyles (including diversity amongst rural elites) at an apparent group of sites (the 'productive' sites) in West Norfolk.

Chapters 5-11 then present the results and analysis of the seven detailed case-studies at Wormegay, Congham, Rudham, Burnham, Sedgeford, Bawsey and West Walton. The case-studies involve either the undertaking of original field survey or the collation and integration of previously unpublished data. Where original field survey is undertaken, a comprehensive approach to the metal-detected data is employed, which includes individually plotting all unique located findspots of metalwork/coinage from the case-study sites within the date range of 411–1100 AD. The recorded findspots are first used to observe overall patterns within the metal

finds group and then, most importantly, to map and interpret intra-site patterns of finds loss. This is then followed by a strategy of targeted and superimposed geophysics and fieldwalking based on standardised and comparable collection units at five of the seven sites. Observed site morphologies are then combined with analysis of the various recovered material classes, including metalwork, pottery and animal bone.

The aim of this integrated analysis is to highlight the complexity of the rural settlement hierarchy and its development between the Seventh and Twelfth centuries, and to use this to address the important research themes, initially raised in Chapter 2, including the nature of transforming economies and identities at settlements. These considerations are presented in a two-tiered synthesis that emphasises common and contrasting themes in different regions. Chapter 12 places the evidence of the West Norfolk sites in their wider East Anglian context, while Chapter 13 concludes by situating the evidence of Norfolk within its wider northern North Sea context.

For the purposes of this thesis, the Anglo-Saxon period is defined as 411-1066 (divided into Early Anglo-Saxon, 450-650, Middle Anglo-Saxon, 650-850 and Late Anglo-Saxon, 850-1066). These are used to denote periods of time only and no cultural or ethnic interpretation is intended in their use. These periods were primarily used for analysis as that is how data are organised by the Norfolk Historic Environment Record office, the primary data source for Chapters 3 and 5-11 (note that their Early Anglo-Saxon period commences in 411 AD and not 450). The chronological bracket of this thesis runs up until 1100 AD, primarily to incorporate a consideration of Domesday Book (1086) in Chapters 5-11, as such, the period from 1066-1100, where discussed, is termed the Anglo-Norman period. The Anglo-Scandinavian period is defined historically as the later Ninth century to 1066 AD, some cultural affinities are implied in the use of this term but, as will be demonstrated in Chapters 2 and 3, 'Anglo-Scandinavian' might encompass a range of negotiable identities.

# Chapter 2: Conceptual influences and changing approaches to economy, settlement and social change.

Having briefly identified the main aims of this thesis, listed the themes for analysis and discussed the key issues within the period of study, this chapter now looks in more detail at the conceptual influences behind these key themes and then demonstrates how the themes raised in Chapter 1 can be developed using the theoretical framework provided by the first part of this chapter. The central aim of this chapter is to provide a contextual framework that informs both the analysis of approaches to data in Norfolk and West Norfolk (Chapter 3), and the design of the specific methodology in Chapter 4.

## Conceptual influences

### Social identities and archaeology

This thesis aims to take an archaeological approach to *social identity* in order to investigate early medieval lifestyles at rural settlements. In order for this to occur we need to understand what we mean by the term, and how we might investigate this archaeologically.

At a fundamental level we might consider the *identity* of an individual as a sense of belonging, in that '...through identity we perceive ourselves, and others see us, as belonging to certain groups and not others...' (Díaz-Andreu and Lucy, 2005, 1). The identity of an individual and the combined *social* identity of a community or society are therefore composed of two basic concepts: the idea of sameness and similarity; and the idea of difference or distinctiveness (Insoll, 2007, 2). Most importantly,

'...identity is not something which is simply an inherent property of human existence, but something which is always being worked at by the individual or society. It is therefore a social project...' (K. Giles, 2000, 8). Difference and sameness might be demonstrable in such diverse areas of social life as gender, ethnicity, religion, age, status/power and ideology (political or religious).

As archaeologists, we are engaged in study of material culture. This means that in order to study aspects of social identities, we are also placed in the position of having to reflect on 'the relationship between the social and the material' (Thomas, 2005, 11). While a number of scholars have considered identity in abstract ways, using methodologies borrowed from sociological and anthropological theory, much less attention has been paid to ways in which the material mechanisms of constructed identity might be studied (K. Giles, 2000, 9). This has been lamented by prehistorians, who suggest that archaeologists are in a unique position to observe social identities 'in process' through material expressions of people's daily lives or 'practice' (M. Giles, 2007, 235-237). We must therefore aim to re-orientate towards this archaeology of practice through the exploration of identity via material culture. As these are key points for current approaches to social identity, their development will now be considered.

**Developing Approaches to Social Identities in Archaeology**

In some ways any recent divorcement of identity and material culture is surprising, as the efforts of earlier archaeologists, although sometimes ill conceived, place an overwhelming emphasis on the equation of 'material' with 'culture' and 'group' identity. For example, archaeologists of Anglo-Saxon England directly equated material culture from cemeteries of the Fifth and Sixth centuries with the invasion of continental ethnic groups (Collingwood and Myers, 1936), namely Angles, Saxons and Jutes, labelled in Bede's Eighth century *Historia Ecclesiastica* (Hodges, 1983, 24). However, as Childe (1956) first realised, the basic assumption that the spatial bounds of a culture-group could be determined by plotting similar archaeological finds was

problematic and frequently produced 'variants' in the 'culture cycle' (Lucas, 2001, 111-114; Trigger, 1989). Indeed, for Anglo-Saxon England it was realised at an early date (Leeds, 1936, 20) that evidence for social organisation, as seen through the evidence of cemeteries alone, is perhaps more closely bound up with ideological statement rather than social fact (Carver, 1989, 142).

Perhaps as a result of the evident dangers of the culture, area approach - where artefact type might directly equate to ethnicity - it is maybe unsurprising that the next generation of archaeologists shied away from approaches to material culture which created neatly bounded socio-cultural units (Jones, 2007, 51). From an early date social anthropologists had been interested in the concept of a society as a system of interrelated parts, although it was not until the second half of the twentieth century that general theories of systems were developed. When this occurred, attention was focussed around social systems as sets of components, separate from environment, which interrelate in such a way as the properties of the whole are different from those which the components exhibit in isolation (Layton, 1997, 6). Building on this the New (or Processual) Archaeology concentrated on the evolution of societal systems, instead of tackling issues of identity, particularly at the level of the individual (Binford, 1972, 1983, 47, 407). Much of this thinking concentrated on settlement systems (Flannery, 1976, 5-6). However, a lack of relevant data (see Rahtz, 1976, 51), meant that a number of these issues could not be tackled by scholars of Anglo-Saxon England (although note the attempts of Rahtz, 1983, 12-23 and Dickinson, 1983, 35). When analysis did occur it took place on the level of what might be called 'macro-social units' (Brookes, 2007, 17) such as formative Kingdoms and an emergent nation state (Bassett, 1989, 1). It is within this broad school of approaches (although also drawing heavily on central place theory) that we might also place Richard Hodges' seminal work, *Dark Age Economics* (1982), which forms the starting point for our consideration of approaches to economies and identities.

During the 1980s, however, criticisms of the New Archaeology were developed, focussing on the claim that it was a more rigorous or scientific discipline than

preceding archaeological studies (Hodder, 1986, 1-18). These criticisms - sometimes labelled 'Post-processual' (in other disciplines 'post-modern' is used) - contested the claims of objectivity within the New Archaeology, arguing that an archaeological study is both a product of the present social context in which it is produced and a subjective interpretation of the meanings behind material culture patterning in the past (Johnson 1999, 86-97). Most importantly, it was also argued that a 'systems' approach had specifically objectivised the relationship between cultural systems and environment, economy and technology at the expense of other less materially tangible features such as ideology and religion, namely aspects of *social identity* (Shanks and Tilley, 1987, 116-134).

Since the late 1980s then, archaeology has often been concerned with promoting the individual as the subject of archaeological enquiry. It has been argued that by concentrating on social systems and long-term processes and removing historical context, the New Archaeology had neglected the dynamic and meaningful links between the archaeological record and the individuals who had created it. This, it was claimed, had resulted in the re-creation of faceless societies who responded passively to the system, and not societies constituted of individuals who were invested with what sociologists had labelled 'agency' (Hodder, 2004, 31 after Giddens, 1979). Borrowing ideas from social anthropologists such as Bourdieu (1977), Post-processual interpretation explored the nature of the relationship between individual agent and societal structure and how best to interpret past societies within modern frames of reference (e.g. Barrett, 1994, 1-6). These key realisations en-route to an archaeology of social identities will now be considered as they form the conceptual background that this thesis hopes is built upon.

**Agency, *habitus* and Social Identities**

The concept of agency can underpin archaeologies of social identity, particularly as our goal is to study changing social identities. As applied to archaeology, agency has, at its core, a very simple observation: that the archaeological record is created by

the actions of individuals and those individuals have a cultural background or structure against which they operate (Johnson, 2007, 142). Prior to this it was:

'... as if the extinct social totality could be conceived of as a series of rooms which existed whether or not they were inhabited; when the rooms were inhabited, however, their shape determined the behaviour of the inhabitants, who in turn left behind a record of their behaviour' (Barrett, 2001, 147).

Those using agency theory are therefore distinguished from earlier scholars who treated societies '...as if they were real things which can be studied independently of the agencies which inhabited them...' (Barrett, 2001, 147). The acknowledgment that individual agents are 'knowledgeable' can be seen as a facet of the growth of self-critical approaches in archaeology in general (Hodder, 1982). However, as agency has been explored in different ways by archaeologists (Gardner, 2004, 1-16), it is worth at first considering some of the conceptual frameworks originally set out by social scientists (who were not working directly with material culture).

A key point here, and a key point for many attempting to build social theory, is the perceived need to understand the relationship between society (or structure) and individual agency. The need to create categorisation and opposition, such as society, individual, and then break these categories down has a long history within post-enlightenment and modern (or rational) western thinking (see for example, Levi Strauss, 1963; Godelier, 1986, 2000; Baudrillard, 1973).

Two sociological approaches to agency that have been applied to archaeological situations are the models of Bourdieu (1977, 1990) and Giddens (1979, 1984). Both theories concentrate on the relationship between agent and structure, and in particular the dichotomy between free individual acts and the organising constraints of social systems (Dovey, 1999, 17). Both works also fall within the broad tradition of post-modern self reflexive thinking. For example, from an early date Bourdieu (1971) argued that, in order to understand symbolism, anthropology must contain two types of analysis: firstly, the study of the subject's experience within social

structures; and secondly, an examination of the context and bias of the anthropologist.

Giddens' theory of *Structuration* suggests that the structural properties of a system exist in and through the activities of individual humans. At the same time, the 'agent' is both empowered and constrained by the social structure in which he lives because the individual agent is never aware of the entire system and might therefore operate under conditions over which he has very limited control (Giddens, 1984, 25; Thomas, 1996, 49). This 'stratified model of agency' is a key conceptual area for archaeological analysis as it suggests that structures are not fixed entities but are constantly transformed through the activity of agents (Shanks and Tilley, 1992, 128). Thus, Gidden's theories, in conjunction with material culture, can be used to examine the changing relationship between agents and the world (Barrett, 1994, 3). In particular, for this thesis and models of early medieval economy we need to explore the role of what have been labelled 'knowledgeable social agents' that is those agents who have the power to transform social structure as an outcome of their practice (Hodder, 1995, 246).

Giddens' theories are closely paralleled by those of Bourdieu, whose *Theory of Practice* and concept of *habitus,* have been applied with increasing frequency to archaeological studies for instance by K. Giles (2000) including the archaeology of early medieval society, economy and material culture (Blinkhorn, 1997). Bourdieu's interest lay in the way in which structural 'rules' come into being and are reproduced by individuals within a society. Bourdieu suggested that, as societal structure is created by the subjective action of individual agents, there could be no externally derived or static rules of structure such as the Marxist mode of production (Bourdieu, 1977, 345). Bourdieu labelled the 'matrix of perceptions, appreciations and actions' pertaining to the individual agent as *habitus* (*ibid*. 83).

Within Bourdieu's *Theory of Practice* apparent social rules (such as those associated with gift exchange in early medieval economies) are actually strategies followed by individual agents on the basis of their *habitus*, and the response of the second party

is not a foregone conclusion. However, in most instances, an individual will unquestioningly follow the accepted social strategy. For example, in class societies, economically exploitative power relations are often deliberately hidden by the dominant classes beneath a disguise of religious or ideological obligation (Bourdieu, 1977, 168). Bourdieu labelled the unquestioned parts of reality *doxa*, and the seldom questioned elements as *orthodox*. In class societies, it is within the interests of the ruling classes to defend these parts of reality so that they continue to be taken for granted and do not become part of the field of *opinion* and therefore questioned (*ibid*.169). The structuring principles which generate and organise practices are roughly equivalent principles to Giddens' theory of *Structuration* (1979). It is within the above outlined theory that archaeological reflections of social identities can begin to be explored.

**Applying Agency and *habitus* to Archaeology**

Having considered the concepts of agency and *habitus*, it is clear that this might be applied to studies of archaeological sites and material culture and, in the case of this thesis, to early medieval settlements and associated material culture. Rather than a passive reflection of social realities, material culture now becomes an active medium for expressing social life through agency and *habitus*. Furthermore, the meaning of things (the set of social relationships between people and the material) is not only multi-layered, it also changes according to the context and the observer (Babic, 2005, 78). However it is only relatively recently that attention has been paid to the ways in which the material mechanisms of constructed identities might be studied (K. Giles, 2000, 9). Nevertheless, there is certainly an increasing realisation that the continuously evolving everyday experience or 'social practice' of the agent can be encapsulated in a variety of material remains (Thomas, 2005, 11-18).

In a recent article Meskell has argued that anthropology has been rather 'top down' in its consideration of power implementation, in that agents' identities are often defined in relation to broader, more formal, social levels (which take longer to

reformulate), as opposed to the individual or personal level of single subjectivity (Meskell, 2007, 24). Instead of existing in the shadow of anthropology, Meskell suggests that archaeology is in a unique position to move beyond the works of Giddens and Bourdieu and redress this imbalance, as artefacts (a core target of archaeological study) can be mobilized and deployed in 'identity struggles'. Archaeological evidence (portable material culture) can therefore be used to interpret these more immediate 'identity struggles' as well as what Meskell terms the more formal 'social levels' which we might equate with social structures (Meskell, 2007, 24).

Meskell's (2007) work is important in that it provides us with a more nuanced approach to the relationship between agency and structure, enabling an archaeology of social identities that can operate on multiple spatial scales. Mouzelis' attention to micro, meso (or middle) and macro scales of agency (1995, 26-27) allows us to take this a step further. For example, Gardner, in an analysis of Roman forts, defined these scales of agency according to social aspects such as state/ethnicity (macro), status/religion/kin-group/community (meso) and individual (micro) (Gardner, 2002, Fig.7; Gardner, 2004, 33-49). Importantly, these scales can overlap so that, for example, 'profession' sits between macro and meso scales of identity. This conceptualisation is important as it allows for the hermeneutic element of interpretation, as opposed to the rigid systematising of the multi-scalar social systems of earlier Processual archaeology (Flannery, 1976 or Hawkes 1954). These models also allow the individual to interact with, for example, different modes of economic identity (e.g. dis-embedded (state) and embedded (kin-group)). The integration of aspects of identities as a result of regional or state controlled economies is something that Romanists have now begun to explore (Bowman and Wilson, 2009; Bang, 2007). These multi-tiered models for agencies and social identities, particularly as applied to economic identity, are a powerful tool to be employed in Chapters 5-11 in this thesis where, at the level of the site, we will explore contested identities from the level of the individual portable object through to the site in the landscape.

The acknowledgment of multi-scalar models of agency and identity leads to a further problem concerning descriptive terminology, something already recognised, albeit obliquely, in early medieval archaeology (Whyman, 2002). Meskell (2007) and Jones (2007), talking about gender and ethnicity respectively, suggest that as archaeological studies of identity that incorporate concepts of theoretical pluralism in social ontology expand, so we will need to develop new multi-dimensional lexicologies as opposed to rigid taxonomies, as well as new perspectives on how we construe categories such as male and female. A pertinent example of this problem is the ascription of descriptive labels such as ecclesiastical (monastery) or secular (manor) to undocumented early medieval rural centres with similar material signatures (see, for example, Loveluck, 2007b). Instead, if we look at documentary portrayals of elite identity, in some cases the secular/ecclesiastical duality creates a false dichotomy in which we imagine material distinctions which are simply not present (Loveluck, 2007a). However, this does not mean that nuanced identities are not present; we are simply in an awkward situation where the same material signature might represent multiple identities. One way forward is to bring in a number of different strands of evidence to supplement the evidence of portable material culture, such as changes to settlement morphology or contemporary documents.

However, in incorporating tiers of identity expressed through the medium of archaeological evidence, we must also be aware that different types of material offer different insights and interpretations into different aspects of identity. For example, Meskell suggests that while the archaeology of portable material culture can explore such diverse aspects of contested social identity as ethnicity, religion, class and status or rank, certain material is more appropriate than others (Meskell, 2007, 24-28). Ethnicity, for example, as a social determinant that is not fundamentally hierarchical might not always coincide with a single language, race, location or material culture (such as pottery type) but markers such as styles of food or household arrangements might be more telling (Meskell, 2007, 25).

In short, the interpretative potential of archaeological identities is as diverse as the range of material itself. For the archaeologist working in an early medieval rural and coastal situation, interpretable remains may appear in a wide range of forms: from portable material culture to environmental remains; and from settlement to landscape. Settlement remains, for example, can allow for diverse aspects of identity, reflecting a number of aspects/levels of agency, to be recovered from portable material culture, an individual component of the total remains from a settlement, but from other elements as well (Loveluck, 2004, 86-96). However, at this level of analysis we must also consider site taphonomy, as pioneered by archaeologists such as Schiffer (1987). This involves evaluation of the deposit or artefact as an intentional reflection of individual agency, or as unintentional even if there is apparent patternation in the artefact or deposition. This requires an interpretation of the site formation process. For example, a Scandinavian Borre-style brooch of the Tenth century actively signals some aspects of individual identity such as ethnic affiliation. In contrast, although equally informative, archaeo-environmental remains, their discard and deposition, would not normally have been used intentionally to signify aspects of identity in the past and can therefore encapsulate a different, perhaps passive, agency. The different potential relationships between humans and objects have previously been considered in the discourse of agency. Gell, for example, developed the concept of dispersed agency (1998) which attempted to redress the imbalance between humans and non-humans as primary agents, by considering the possibilities of human-centred engagement with other entities such as animals (Russell, 2007, 4). Russell (2007, 4), for example, discusses 'primary' and 'secondary' agents. However, although these concepts are closer to our notions of 'passive' and 'active' agency, a key difference not factored into previous accounts is the relationship of agency to taphonomy. Babic (2005, 75) has also noted that Bourdieu (1984) discussed conscious and unconscious acts of consumption, which might equate to these different agencies.

Importantly, any given material class or object type might be considered to be 'passive' or 'active' depending on the shifting temporal and situational context. For example, in early medieval economies, it has been suggested that notions of 'high

status' attached to certain materials might alter according to mode of economic transaction (*vis a vis* social system) or landscape zone (Loveluck and Tys, 2006, 142-143). This is why it is important to explore a wide range of material classes in an integrated manner if we are to sharpen the interpretation of contrasting social determinants and aspects of social identities (Loveluck, 2007b). This is the core theoretical focus of Chapter 3.

Having explored the way in which we might apply agency and *habitus* to archaeological enquiry, we need to explore the key social determinants within social identities that this thesis hopes to investigate, namely status and ethnicity. An analysis of current approaches to these aspects of identity needs to be presented through the main categories of evidence available to this particular study: portable material culture and coastal landscapes. Settlements will be discussed later. A key theme running through this discussion is the extent to which agents might define themselves by their occupation, practice and economic role. As will be demonstrated, this aspect of identity can cut through both status and identity.

**Portable Material culture and Social identities: Status**

Processual archaeological approaches to status, particularly as applied to early medieval society have often concentrated on identifying social evolution characterised by greater social complexity and inequality, essentially the emergence of social differentiation (Hodges, 1981, 93). Accordingly, the evolution of social systems leads to the rise of the 'haves' and the 'have-nots', frequently labelled as high-status and low-status (Trigger, 1998, 76). In relation to portable material culture, a high status object might be defined as that which is rare or exotic, hard to acquire without power and therefore desirable to control, or in Marxist models, where object circulation is restricted to and by certain social classes (Kohl, 1987). Many earlier models of early medieval economy, regarding economies as socially embedded, revolved around the desires of 'high-status' elites (particularly royal

elites) to acquire ‘exotica’ (for example, gold, silver or even certain types of pottery) and control its distribution in order to gain/maintain prestige (Palmer, 2003).

However, for these concepts of ‘high status’ to work in relation to portable material culture, it is required that all sections of society within the system hold the same notions of value towards specific ‘rare’ commodities (Arnold, 1982, 124-131). These notions of uniform, socially embedded, economies, not easily understood from the modern frame of reference, can be traced back to studies by cultural anthropologists working with kin-based tribes such as Malinowski (1922) and Mauss (1925). These types of economies were later labelled *substantivist* by economists such as Polyani (1957), who, by arguing for substantivist economies, was effectively saying that self awareness of economy as a ‘separate institution’ (i.e. separate from identity) accompanied the birth of a market system, which harks back to Weber’s concepts of the inexorable march to market rationalisation (Giddens, 1971). This was in stark contrast to earlier scholars who assumed similar market forces of supply and demand in the ancient world as the modern one (Rostovtzeff, 1926).

It has more recently been noted that during some phases of the human past societies existed contemporaneously but with very different notions of value. Modern instances are described by anthropologists, for example Malinowski’s study of the *kula* gift exchange system (Malinowski, 1922, 83). In academic archaeology, it was realised that there is always the *potential* for different notions of value to be in concurrent use, something perhaps underplayed in Processual archaeologies of status and commodity like Renfrew’s (1977). For example, economies that contain both socially embedded (substantitivist) and dis-embedded or market-based (formalist) aspects have been argued for in Middle Anglo-Saxon England (Blinkhorn, 1999, 20), although a shift from one to the other economic mode is implied here. More recently, studies of early medieval economies have suggested that contemporary societies contained complex spheres of circulation where different notions of value for commodities were concurrent among different individuals and communities (Loveluck, 1996). This might easily equate to the co-existence of both socially embedded and dis-embedded exchange and, ergo, quite distinct concurrent

notions of value and status. Certainly, as our consideration of coastal landscapes will show, not all sections of society held the same notion of commodities.

The above observations suggest that past societies might feature diverse notions of value in relation to portable material culture. However, instead of becoming stranded in uncertain notions of what 'high-status' might actually represent, we might instead look towards the concepts of agency and *habitus*. By orientating our methodology towards analysis of how objects are used in social practice we embark upon a more satisfactory project allowing for a clearer description of society. A good example is found in post-processual archaeological approaches to power.

Approaches to status, closely related to class, have been questioned since the 1960's as portraying a closed cohesive system structured around a tightly arranged hierarchy of power (Meskell, 2007, 23, Bauman, 1995, 77). Power has traditionally been regarded in archaeology as a 'top-down' system with those at the top of the system having more power and status than those at the bottom (Shanks and Tilley, 1987, 72). However, following the works of Foucault in philosophy/sociology, power relationships can now be seen as arenas for the dialectic of agency. One of Foucault's central tenet was that power is not inherently negative or repressive but could either be productive or linked to social control (Foucault, 1980, 98). Importantly, power was not owned by the state but was actually dispersed among all social institutions (Foucault, 1980, 98). In archaeology, this concept was successfully applied by Shanks and Tilley who suggested that power could be separated into two forms, 'power to' and 'power over' (1987b, 129). Power to act is an essential element of social life and is distinguished from 'power over' or social control.

Thus, by using social pluralism to redefine the term 'power' we can embark upon new narratives, as envisaged by Meskell (2007, 23-43) and Jones (2007, 445-457). For example, a recent study into the use of dress accessories amongst the later medieval peasantry of rural England has built upon some of these concepts (Smith, 2009, 327). Smith used the concept of *resistance*, where subordinate elements of communities might have *power to* select distinctive suites of material culture, in this

case decorated metalwork usually privilege of the elite, in order to challenge the established order through social aspiration (Smith, 2009, 327 after Hinton, 2005, 218) be this consciously or unconsciously (*ibid*. 310). These new ways of looking at portable material culture offer many new interpretative possibilities, and this way of looking at status via power illustrated by metalwork could equally be applied to, for example, consumption through animal bones.

**Portable Material culture and Social identities: Ethnicity**

Ethnicity is defined by Lucy (2005, 101) as '...feelings of social belonging based on culturally constructed notions of communal identities...', and the archaeological study of ethnicity requires a '...method of classifying people (both self and other) that uses origin (socially constructed) as its primary reference... (Levine, 1999, 168) '. The study of ethnicity is an important aspect of social identity for this thesis. In Anglo-Saxon England ethnicity is particularly important in discovering the role of material culture in the construction of both Early Anglo-Saxon and later Anglo-Scandinavian social identities, and this is explored in detail in Chapter 3.

As noted above, traditional archaeological approaches to ethnicity concentrated on equating diagnostic material culture with discrete groupings. For example, a clear link was made between certain diagnostic artefacts (e.g. Early Anglo-Saxon period grave goods) and ethnic groups (e.g. Angles, Saxons or Jutes), which incorrectly (both consciously and unconsciously) were equated to race (Jones, 1997, 1-5). Subsequently, both sociologists and anthropologists have demonstrated that 'ethnicity' (often explored through ideas of shared group origins) is not necessarily something people are born with. Instead, ethnicity is a constructed aspect of social relationships which cuts across other social determinants such as gender and religion (Lucy, 2005, 86, 94). However, although ethnicity is certainly not a 'natural' inherited aspect of humanity, it should also not be regarded as 'instrumental or infinitely malleable' (*ibid*, 100) - it is just one social determinant within an identity. The writing

or narrating of history is also seen as important in the creation of ethnic identities (*ibid*, 99).

These observations can be applied at both extensive and intensive spatial levels of archaeological analysis. At the extensive level, armed with the notion that ethnicity is a constructed aspect of social relationships Hodder (1982b) demonstrated, through ethno-archaeological study in Kenya, that some material-culture distributions related to tribal boundaries while others cross-cut them for a variety of reasons. Following this observation, interest is no-longer in the definition of neat ethnic grouping via observations of material culture distributions, but in understanding and exploring *why* (for example) distributions of material might vary from the 'norm' (Shennan, 1989, 13), the social contexts in which objects are produced and the ways people use them.

At the intensive level, if an ethnic group is a created idea, people will choose markers that are relevant to them. For example, instead of the Processual approach which sees the role of ethnicity as primarily designed to maximise self interest (such as coherent nation origins emphasised by a national costume) (Jones, 2007, 48), material signalling of ethnicity might equally be regarded as a more subjective, self-defining phenomena that can be undertaken at the level of the individual (Jones, 1997, 56-79). Indeed, self-categorisation might not always be a positive thing, as it may lead to a process of resistance or reaction through material display (as was the case with medieval pins and issues of status; Smith, 2009, 327).

If we apply agency and *habitus* to an archaeology of ethnicity, we can try and arrive at a more satisfactory narrative of society through examining social practice. In particular, archaeologists should attempt to see how material culture was actively used by people. This might reveal how the reproduction of feelings of ethnicity (and thus ethnic relationships) happens in a society (Lucy, 2005, 96). Drawing on Bourdieu, Jones suggests that 'the subjective constructed ethnic identity is grounded in the shared subliminal dispositions of the *habitus* which shape, and are shaped by, commonalities of practice' (Jones, 2007, 49). In short, a shared *habitus* engenders

identification among similar people which might be reflected materially. In contrast, social practices might also be discrete to very specific spatial and temporal contexts (that is, two contemporary individuals might choose to signal their ethnicity in different ways) and 'always involves active processes of performance and interpretation in the objectification of cultural difference' (Jones, 2007, 51). However, although this is clearly an exciting way forward, until recently there were few studies which used the active nature of material culture to reconsider the nature of the communities within which people were active (Lucy, 2005, 91).

Nevertheless, studies are now appearing. For example, an early example using *habitus* was Blinkhorn's argument that even undecorated Anglo-Saxon pottery, previously considered 'utilitarian', could be re-interpreted as an essential part of the social and cultural identity of its user (1997, 115), with subtle differences in form or fabric that might indicate distinct social practice (e.g. deliberately choosing an inclusion for specific types of vessel) (*ibid* 117). In addition, although the decoration on Early Anglo-Saxon cremation urns has been seen to signal a whole complex of meanings (Richards, 1987, 193), Blinkhorn suggests that the theory that wide rim diameters might be linked to female burials could also be applied to vessels outside a cemetery context (Blinkhorn, 1997, 122). In short, when social factors are taken into account, differences become multiplied and we can attempt to identity the meaning of vessel shape in terms of 'their social standing and cultural origins of their users' (*ibid* 123).

In the light of these potential insights pertaining to ceramics, this thesis uses specific material culture datasets to explore important aspects of identity which can be equated to ethnicity. For example, rather than identifying 'Anglian' burial rites in Norfolk (Lucy 1998; 2000a), we might explore the deliberate selection of both textiles and artefacts (particularly portable metalwork) in the continuing creation and recreation of complex local identities (Lucy, 2005, 105). Complex expressions of ethnic identity might also be visible in Ninth to Eleventh century artefacts previously labelled Scandinavian or Anglo-Scandinavian (Hadley, 2006, 120). Of particular interest in this respect are artefacts and ecofacts which might reflect displays of

passive identity such as animal bones. In the past decade, those studying ethnicity have been increasingly interested in exploring the possibility that differential patterns of food preparation and consumption may be markers of ethnic identity (Hamilakis, 1999, 38-54). Remembering that ethnicity can also cut across other aspects of social identity, we can also use differential patterns in the consumption of animals as indicators of other social determinants, particularly ideology and status, discussed in Chapter 3.

Moving away from portable material, we might also consider patternation in rubbish deposition and other structuring of space at settlements, such as the use of boundaries or communal space, as conscious or subconscious ways of emphasising communal similarity and difference (Lucy, 2005, 106; Barrett, 1994, 13-25), although these features are usually interpreted as reflecting other aspects of social identity rather than expressions of ethnic identity. These important interpretative aspects will be considered in more detail below, as a distinct aspect of social identities that might be explored via early medieval settlement remains.

**Coastal landscapes and Social identities**

Having explored how recent archaeological approaches to aspects of social identities are relevant to this thesis via considerations of portable material culture, it is now important to look at how these approaches can be incorporated into a study of coastal landscapes. This is important as this thesis focuses on a comparative study of settlements within a coastal study area: West Norfolk.

The empirical study of coastal archaeology and wetlands has a long and distinguished history. Yet social interpretation of these landscapes and the integration of archaeological approaches to social identities have been under-utilised until recently, especially for the early medieval period. As long ago as the 1920s Sir Cyril Fox effectively pioneered the sub-discipline of Landscape Archaeology by plotting archaeological data in an effort to map cultural developments in the Cambridgeshire fens (Fox, 1923; Lucas, 2001, 124). This work, however,

concentrated on the importance of studying human settlement in relation to environmental conditions, effectively using distribution maps to emphasise the power of environment in '...controlling human expansion and settlement' (Hall and Coles, 1994, 6).

The work of Fox was the forerunner of the more detailed Fenland Research Committee, and then the Sites and Monuments Records that provided baseline data for the subsequent rigorous Fenland surveys from the 1980s (Hall and Coles, 1994). The Fenland surveys collected huge amounts of data from these wetland landscapes (for example, see Silvester 1988 for Norfolk). However, the interpretative monograph that proved to be the culmination of the project, although moving on from a culture-historical approach, still essentially viewed human activity in the fenland as characterised by human response to environmental constraints (Hall and Coles, 1994). For example, Hall and Coles contextualise Fenland life as '...on the islands and edges prehistoric people made attempts to grasp the offerings and opportunities of the Fenland waters and lands '(*ibid* 1). This quotation encapsulates the empirical tendencies of much wetland archaeology, frequently characterising regions as marginal, with social systems developing as a response to environmental constraints within the context of an exploitative economic system (Van de Noort and O'Sullivan, 2006, 29).

Since the early 1990s, however, new approaches to landscape have been developed. Particularly important was the movement away from earlier approaches that saw space, environment or landscapes as neutral natural spaces, separated from a study of culture and material culture; the nature/culture divide (Ingold, 1990; 1993; 1995; Tilley, 1994, 11). In particular, for archaeology, Ingold (1993, 152-174) introduced the concept of 'dwelling' where 'landscape' is defined as '...the world as it is known to those who dwell therein, who inhabit its places and journey along the paths connecting them' (Ingold, 1993, 156). This approach can be directly paralleled by Tilley's (1994) sentiment that space does not exist until it is inhabited, from which point 'spaces' are social productions that are 'centred in relation to human agency and ... amenable to reproduction or change because their constitution takes place as

part of the day-to-day praxis or practical activity of individuals and groups in the world' (Tilley, 1994, 11).

These above approaches, clearly enabled by an acknowledgment of human agency and articulated via the concept of *habitus*, can be directly applied to the study of coastal landscapes. However, there has been a tendency to concentrate on the past experience of landscape (phenomenology) at the expense of more systematic considerations of material culture patterning in coastal zones. This is unfortunate as an entirely social approach seems to be opposed to Tilley's observation that humans are not entirely social beings (echoed by Insoll, 2007, 4), being constrained by spatial and physical realities of the locales in which they operate, and that '...actors draw upon their settings; and the manner which they do so depends upon the specificity of their relationship. In this manner *locales*...can be defined as a presencing of potentialities on which actors draw in their daily conduct of their activities (Tilley, 1994, 19).'

Additionally, and in prehistoric archaeology especially, there has been an unfortunate tendency to explore ritual or economic activities in wetland landscapes as occurring within the context of 'liminal' zones (places on perceived thresholds or boundaries) and frequently to equate 'liminal' with marginal (Van de Noort and O'Sullivan, 2006, 29). In many ways this reductionism seems to echo the environmentally deterministic analysis from which post-processualists attempted to retreat.

More recently, however, instead of uniformly adhering to perceived concepts of 'liminality', landscape archaeology approaches have attempted to highlight the possibility that environments such as frontier zones, with quite specific landscapes and social and political conditions (including varying degrees of internal and external influences), might also provoke specific and dynamic, but certainly not 'marginal', aspects in the early medieval communities that inhabited them (Reynolds and Langlands, 2006, 14). Reynolds and Langlands attempted to demonstrate that this might occur in frontier zones at different scales of identity '...from the individual to

the household, and from settlement to tithing to estate, before social groupings of a yet higher order: hundred, shire and kingdom' (Reynolds and Langlands, 2006, 14).

This nuanced approach to identities has not yet been applied so readily to early medieval coastal landscapes which might also be considered a 'frontier' zone (although note Loveluck, 2010/11, 1-5). In contrast, prehistorians of Atlantic Europe have advanced an approach that integrates a number of studies and a number of spatial scales of analysis, from those that emphasise the importance of the specific cultural contexts and the role of the individual (e.g. Henderson, 2007 following Bradley, 1990; 1997; Barrett, 1994) through to detailed regional sequences and large-scale overviews (Cunliffe, 2001, 484-488).

In particular, by embracing the *Annales* school of history, most noticeably the works of Fernand Braudel (1972), Cunliffe (2001) has enabled Atlantic communities to be analysed in this way and presents them as a dynamic multi-faceted phenomenon. The *Annales* school introduced the concept of *longue durée* which gives priority to long-term historical structures over individual events. In this explanatory framework human history of the events and politics of the individual is seen to be constrained by longer-lasting social structures (such as the civilization) that themselves exist within the wider context of geographical time and changing environmental constraints (see Braudel 1981, 23-24; 2002, 11). Yet crucially, despite the importance of the human response to environmental constraints, Cunliffe reminds us that Braudel also argued that: ''…history is not made by physical features, but by the men who control or discover them' so that 'the lesson is clear – an estuary may develop as a port, but always in response to the changing needs of the community' (Cunliffe, 2001, 33). Interestingly, as early as *The Anglo-Saxon Achievement* (1989), Hodges suggested that early medieval archaeology might aspire to the analytical methodologies of the *Annales* school but omitted from his discussion any consideration of coastal landscapes other than on the macro-scale.

There is increasingly an awareness that, far from being marginal landscapes, where social identities are simply a product of mans' subsistence in an inhospitable

environment, coastal identities might be studied as dynamic archaeologies of practice played-out against very particular environmental preconditions (Van de Noort and O'Sullivan, 2006, 78). Of particular relevance is the realisation that in coastal, wetland and estuarine landscapes and their immediate hinterlands, instead of identities defined in ethnic or class terms, we might be able to define both individual and community identities in relation to their work (*ibid*, 82), for example, salt production (Hall and Coles, 1994, 117), or communities involved in establishing medieval fishtraps (Van de Noort and O'Sullivan, 2006, 81). This might go some way to redressing the active role that production (as opposed to trade and exchange) took within these communities (see above, and Wickham, 2008, 19).

Scholars of Carolingian Europe, utilising contemporary documents, have already proposed models of early medieval social organisation that dovetail well with archaeological models in which coastal identities are defined in relation to work. Verhulst has proposed regional economies in which rural producers might be required to render a proportion of their specialist products to a variety of different elite groups (both secular and ecclesiastical), while other social groups, such as merchants and traders, sell products in alienable exchange for goods or for coinage, albeit subject to 'royal' tolls (Verhulst, 2002, 87-88). In these models, producers in coastal zones may have existed on the edges of elite jurisdiction and taken to specialist production of wool, textiles and salt for alienable exchange (Loveluck and Tys 2006, 142). Intriguingly, Lebecq's investigation of early medieval Frisia (1983; 1992) also demonstrated that individuals might have had transient work-related identities, changing from seafaring merchants to agriculturalists at different times of year. Thus, people may have actively defined themselves by their economic role differently according to the season. This represents a historically documented example of the sort of dynamic agency and *habitus* that we might hope to identify archaeologically. However, before we can fully explore the wider significance of these particular early medieval attitudes to commodity and identity, we must first revisit some of the wider themes.

## Approaches to analysis

The first half of this chapter analysed the key conceptual themes surrounding the archaeological recovery and identification of social identities. In particular, status, ethnicity and agency in coastal landscapes, were identified as key social determinants to be investigated. Having explored conceptual frameworks, we now need to review the key conceptual themes pertaining to the study of early medieval rural settlement and economy. Firstly, we must look at past approaches to portable material culture, economy and identity, including the recognition of the 'productive' sites. Secondly, we must consider past approaches to early medieval settlements and social change. This will allow us to develop a methodology that can identify transforming social identities in early medieval West Norfolk by integrating a detailed analysis of rural settlement morphologies *and* portable material culture profiles.

### Economy, identity and portable material culture

Interpreting early medieval economic lives, although important, is not the only aspect of social identities that we want to look at in relation to rural settlements in this thesis. However, as this aspect of society has frequently been brought to the fore in the exploration of early medieval societies, a consideration of the development of interpretative models for investigating social identities must commence here.

Much archaeological thinking around early medieval economies is currently articulated around debates set up by Richard Hodges (1982). Prior to this, Henri Pirenne (1925; 1939), had provided the first explicit interpretation of the economic transformation of Western Europe between late antiquity and the early medieval period (Lebecq, 1997, 67). Pirenne had argued for a vibrant trading economy, in the late antique Mediterranean world until the Seventh century AD, when the impact of market trade, centred on the Islamic world, then created an inward looking rural

economy in the Carolingian Empire until the Ninth century (Pirenne, 1925, 12-22). At this time, migrations from Scandinavian Europe brought economic dynamism in the form of commerce and trade to the Carolingian world (Pirenne, 1939, 239).

In contrast, Hodges (1982) saw market trade commencing a lot later. For example, it was suggested that silver coinage minted by Offa who reigned 757-797, represented the first coins in Anglo-Saxon England used for ordinary market exchange (Hodges, 1982, 108). In this, Hodges' work was heavily influenced by studies in cultural anthropology and substantivist economics that had discussed systems of socially embedded prestige gift exchange (Malinowski, 1922, Mauss, 1925 and Polyani, 1957), as well as geographical studies utilising Christaller's (1966) *central place theory*, such as Carol Smith's models of central places and *dendritic* satellite centres (1976). Using this work, Hodges (1982) built a model that saw the transformation of people's economic lives in North West Europe as *the* defining social determinant, overlying other aspects of identity such as ethnicity and status.

Hodges argued that between the Seventh and Ninth centuries AD social identities developed around royal elites, who monopolised long-distance trade and exchange in luxury goods, such as imported pottery, glass, gold and silver artefacts, in order to enable royal patronage, which was 'very much the language of power' (Palmer 2003, 48–60, see also Astill 1985, 215–31). This process was articulated around emergent proto-urban centres labelled *emporia* or *–wics,* many of which would eventually develop into towns (Hodges, 1982, 197). Here, Hodges' ideas were no doubt influenced by new discoveries in European centres, such as Dorestad (Van Es, 1990, 151-182), where finds of imported pottery were interpreted as evidence for the emergence of commercial trade by the Eighth century (Van Es, 1969, 206). In addition, the importance of the chief or big-man, who builds up prestige through the control of exotic items in order to re distribute them as gifts, is quite closely paralleled by Renfrew's model of *peer polity* interaction (Renfrew, 1975, 3-59; Dark, 1995, 189).

In order to narrate social change, Hodges proposed a typology for the development of the emporia: the type A-C *emporia* (Hodges, 1982, 50-2), which can be paralleled

to Biddle's (1976) criteria-based approach for the definition of towns. Type A *emporia*, following Polyani's observation of ports as neutrality devices (Polyani, 1963, 30), were small beach markets of the Sixth and Seventh century located at territorial boundaries which became harder to control as long-distance trade increased, undermining royal power. This led to the royal foundation of larger settlements, the Type B *emporia*, where trade could be controlled and which contained easily taxable communities engaged in specialised manufacture of craft products and the exchange of these items and local raw materials for luxury goods (Hodges, 1982, 197). These sites were characterised by, amongst other things, a planned street layout (Hodges, 1982, 50-52). By the late Eighth and early Ninth century a lowering in the level of imported luxury goods combined with Viking incursions and the fragmentation of the Carolingian Empire meant that controlling the import of luxury goods became almost impossible. This led to either an abandonment of the Type B *emporia*, or the refocusing of the role of the *emporia* towards a regional economy (Type C *emporia*). This fundamental change to the maritime-oriented settlement landscape around the North Sea was portrayed as the material manifestation of a crucial transformation from a socially embedded, reciprocal exchange economy to a commercialised market economy; a direct result of Viking control of trade routes between the Ninth and Tenth centuries (Hodges, 1982, 151–61, Hodges and Whitehouse, 1989, 115-149).

**Discussing the emporia model: The circulation of portable material culture and early medieval settlement diversity**

To Hodges then, the development of early medieval social identities was, up to the Ninth century at least, closely linked to economic roles within a strict context of royal control at the *emporia*. Yet even prior to Hodges, there had been a disagreement on the nature of material culture circulation within early medieval economies between those who (like Hodges) argued that Anglo-Saxon England coin-use was in a context of socially embedded gift exchange (Grierson, 1959, 123-140), and those who provided rational market-based interpretations of coin-use that sat well with the

work of Pirenne (Loyn, 1962, 116-118). It is therefore of little surprise that the model of royally controlled socially embedded trade articulated around the *emporia* has received substantial questioning and adaption since the publication of *Dark Age Economics* in 1982.

As early as 1985, Astill felt that the nature of exchange at the *emporia* may have been more complex than Hodges allowed (Astill, 1985, 224-225). Subsequently, a number of commentaries have suggested that Hodges over-concentrated on trade and the circulation of objects at the expense of other important aspects of contemporary lifestyles, such as production (Moreland, 2000a, 6). Saunders even suggested that Hodges had 'fetishised the sphere of circulation' (2001, 8). Importantly, however, excavations during the 1980s also started to demonstrate that instead of entities featuring strictly controlled exchange lifestyles, the *emporia* might have contained populations with lifestyles that involved varied aspects of production and consumption, for example, metalworking and craftworking at Southampton (Hinton, 1999, 24-31; Brisbane, 1988, 15-16), and industrial-scale pottery production, varied craftworking and possible coin production at Ipswich and London (Wade, 1988; Metcalf, 1984; Vince, 1988). As a result, Hodges revised his thesis to accommodate the important role of production (Hodges and Whitehouse, 1989, 115-149). This has led to a debate about the scale of production at the *emporia*, its control and whether this was at a level which might have instigated widespread trade (Scull, 1997, 269-298).

Another way in which Hodges reappraised his own thesis was by recognising the important role that ecclesiastical and secular estates might have played in the reorganisation of production and the development of economies (Hodges and Whitehouse, 1989, 115-149). This introduced a more obvious regional component to the *emporia* model. However, Hodges still emphasised that this production was controlled by the royal elite from the *emporia*. The role of gift-exchange also continued to be important. Thus, even when socially embedded exchange was completely transformed to commerce and the free market by the Ninth century, it was the now sedentary king who controlled monetary wealth (Hodges and

Whitehouse, 1989, 115-149). This model largely corresponds with those of earlier scholars working in Carolingian Europe (Duby, 1968, 28-58) who used estate surveys to show that traditionally inward-looking bipartite estates were actually producing enough surplus to be sold and traded (Devroey, 2001, 34; Wickham, 2008, 14). Unfortunately, this work gave primacy to the historical record over archaeological evidence and therefore associated systemic change with individuals or historically documented elites and the king (Saunders, 1991, 143).

Yet it is too easy to be over critical of Hodges. One of the key reasons for the *emporia*-centred model was the sparse material available in rural areas to address questions of economic relations (Innes, 2007, 6). It is only in the last twenty years that archaeological data has been forthcoming in abundance from rural areas. This has been a product of the professionalization of archaeological fieldwork in many parts of Europe, combined with new methods of finds retrieval, such as metal detecting in the UK. The extent and nature of the circulation of portable material culture is now far wider than once thought (Loveluck and Tys, 2006, 141-142), evidencing a range of social identities in the rural landscape and allowing archaeologists to reappraise the workings of the early medieval economy (McCormick, 2001, 12). For example, discoveries such as the Scandinavian beach-market sites at Gudme and Lundeborg (Nielsen *et al*., 1994), which could theoretically have existed from the Fifth century onwards (Carver, 1989, 11), enabled archaeologists to question the appropriateness of Hodges' Type A-C *emporia* categorisation. Scull, for example, suggested that many beach trading sites with a degree of permanence spread the functions of the emporia throughout the rural landscape from the Seventh century onwards (Scull, 1992, 2002).

Throughout the 1990s, archaeologists used this new rural data to explore early medieval economies via the workings of 'hinterlands', culminating in Whyman (2002). The occasional discovery of rural sites associated with material culture indicative of trade, exchange, production and consumption, led to further considerations of the important role that rural production and exchange in bulk commodities (now invisible) such as wool, cloth, hides and slaves might have played

within an economic system incorporating the *emporia* (Blackmore, 2002). The important role of bulk commodities is corroborated by documentary evidence such as a letter from Charlemange to Offa discussing the exchange of textiles (Hodges, 2000, 63). Yet, to an extent this evidence was still presented as 'exceptions' to the general, *emporia* centred rules (Verhaeghe, 2005), despite mounting evidence from the animal bone record which increasingly portrayed the *emporia* as communities of provisioned consumers with a highly structured economic relationship with producer hinterlands (O'Connor, 1991; Bourdillon, 1994; Crabtree, 1994; 1996). The label 'hinterland' is itself interesting in that, although it invites interest in the dynamics of rural settlement and economy, arguments are still being articulated around the emporia.

**Material culture use: New models for the transformation of rural settlement, economy and exchange networks**

At the start of this decade, Moreland (2000b) attempted to re-orientate early medieval economic debate by promoting the existence of dynamic patterns of production and consumption in the rural settlement landscape prior to the emergence of production at the *emporia* in the Eighth century (Moreland, 2000b, 69, 96). By comparing patterns of consumption (e.g. pots, coins and literacy) and production (e.g. livestock, cereal processing and craft activities) at rural sites he was able to propose a model for Middle Anglo-Saxon England suggesting a settlement hierarchy of at least four levels based on the range of functions and not the quantities of different material classes represented. Firstly, at the top of the pyramid, were regional central places including major ecclesiastical and secular sites characterised by coinage, imports, craft production, and literacy. Secondly, there were settlements that have some of these features but were materially less well endowed. Thirdly, there were sites that have some evidence for participation in exchange networks, but which appeared more deeply embedded in structures of rural production (e.g. Ramsbury, Wiltshire, Moreland, 2000b, 99). Finally, there were the numerous sites which were currently archaeologically invisible '...because

they did not receive the fruits of the economic transformations which they ultimately drove...' (Moreland, 2000b, 96).

As a result, the study of early medieval economy and identity started to move on from a study of 'hinterlands' into a more nuanced scheme of rural settlement (Whyman, 2002). Most notably a number of undocumented rural sites which may have contained communities and individuals who were largely defined by their role in long distance trade have now been discovered, and were highlighted in the 1999 publication, *Beyond the Emporia* (Anderton, 1999). For example, continental imports of pottery have been recovered from the beach trading site at *Sandtun*, West Hythe, Kent (Gardiner *et al.*, 2001); and early coinage and metalwork from Barham and Coddenham, Suffolk (Newman, 1999).

These sites, frequently labelled 'rural centres' (Hamerow, 2002, 125) or 'productive' sites (Ulmschneider and Pestell, 2003), give a truer impression of the range of material classes, settlements and potential social identities involved in trade and exchange in the rural landscape of Anglo-Saxon England. They might also help to counter notions of a strictly controlled Eighth century economy, and, most importantly, help to highlight the importance of consumption and production in the creation of social identities and not just elite identities. However, these sites are not without interpretative complications and these will now be considered in more detail.

**'Productive' Sites and the emergence of 'elites'**

Since the 1980s a growing popularity in the use of metal detectors by amateurs in the UK has led to the discovery of a huge number of isolated findspots of *sceatta* coins and a smaller number of outstanding surface-find assemblages, consisting of coins and other non-ferrous metalwork, in rural areas. If we accept that coins of this date represent coin-using individuals engaged in some form of economic transaction (Naylor, 2004, 55), then this new data demonstrates that there were numerous

places, apart from the *emporia,* where individuals were actively participating in international or regional trade and exchange, and contributing to the economic system as a whole (Ulmschneider and Pestell, 2003, 1).

The outstanding sites, which date to the late Seventh century onwards, are often labelled collectively 'productive' sites: a term initially given by numismatists to indicate sites where prolific finds had been made. Ulmschneider has defined 'productive' sites simply as places, whether excavated or metal detected, that produce large quantities of coin and metalwork finds (2000a, 53-79). However, because many 'productive' sites are represented solely by unsystematically collected assemblages of coinage and metalwork, little is known about the context of these surface finds. This lack of investigation has historically been due to poor reporting of metal finds by amateurs because of a climate of suspicion between archaeologists and metal detectorists arising from the amount of illegal metal detecting that has taken place in the UK (Richards and Naylor, 2009).

Unfortunately, it is felt that many 'productive' site interpretations are extrapolated too readily into wider economic debates without detailed analysis of the context of these surface finds. Ulmschneider, for example, despite acknowledging problems in the interpretation of unstratified metal-detected finds (2002), chose to emphasise the common characteristics of these places, suggesting that they are characterised by inland topographic settings and large quantities of coin and non-ferrous metalwork loss in the Eighth and Ninth centuries (2000b, 337) and, secondly, that they represent central places with 'strong' indications of some form of local, inter-regional or international commerce (*trade* rather than socially embedded *exchange)* as part of their primary function (2002; 2000b, 104). In this model we might therefore expect a 'productive' site to be orientated around a temporary or permanent market or fair component.

Ulmschneider's conclusion that some early medieval rural sites may have functioned primarily as local and regional 'market' sites from c. 600 AD onwards is not necessarily disputed but, fundamentally, we need to be aware that metal artefacts

and coinage only illustrate certain aspects of economy and lifestyle (e.g. status, consumption, and some aspects of trade and exchange). Furthermore, '...only a limited number of sites will repay detecting, depending obviously on the quantity of metal objects in the topsoil...' (Gregory and Rogerson, 1984, 179). Many scholars are unhappy with these current approaches for grouping together a number of sites that *appear* to share common attributes only because they share a common method of discovery: metal detecting (Richards, 1999, 71). Indeed, Richards argued that the 'productive' site at Cottam, East Yorkshire, was actually more representative of a 'normal' buried Middle Anglo-Saxon settlement in the region (1999, 71-80) and that the most exceptional thing about it was that it had been extensively ploughed, placing large amounts of detectable metal in the ploughsoil (Richards 1999, 77-9).

Clearly, fundamental questions need to be asked about 'productive' sites, least of which is whether they actually represent permanent settlements. It is suspected that there is actually a huge range of distinctive site-types hidden beneath this label (Pestell, forthcoming). For example, even without further investigation, a distinction could be made between surface-find 'productive' sites rich in coinage and those rich in their overall metalwork assemblage (*ibid*). The possibility of 'productive' sites to being multi-functional places must also be considered. Ironically, this can already be demonstrated in studies that have looked at coinage and metalwork alone. Ulmschneider initially suggested that a number of smaller 'productive' sites might potentially represent the location of centres of ecclesiastical authority, such as early minsters (Ulmschneider, 2000b, 105), an idea reinforced by the presence of later medieval churches near many 'productive' sites (Pestell, forthcoming). However, Naylor's work on coin finds from 'productive' sites in Yorkshire, where coinage seems to come under much closer royal control (but remains in abundant use) following Eadbertht's (737-58) reforms (Naylor, 2007, 41-61, esp. p. 59) reminds us of the possibility that variety within the mechanisms of control over exchange, and the potential for coinage at 'productive' sites is representative of a variety of social identities. Similarly, the recent study by Hutcheson for Norfolk, regarded coin finds in widely distributed 'productive' land-units as related to the payment of taxation, which might indicate a variety of local elite identities (Hutcheson, 2006, 79-84).

This thesis contends that new interpretations have a responsibility to ascertain a number of things about a 'productive' site (or indeed any site) before elevating it to the level of 'market' (Richards, 2003; Leahy, 2003). Firstly, detailed work on potential site morphologies and other material classes indicative of trade/exchange (such as imported pottery or craft products) must be undertaken before hypothesising about early economic development. It is suspected that this would reveal a diverse range of elite identities, both secular and ecclesiastical, involved in trade and exchange activities, as is now accepted by Hodges (2006, 67 and see below). Secondly, it is impossible to see whether the circulation of material culture at 'productive sites' is exceptional in comparison with wider regional settlement hierarchies although Ulmschneider (2000b) and Palmer (2003, 48-60) have attempted to do so. This makes it difficult to develop better terminologies for describing sites or identify contrasting social identities and has resulted in the uncritical use of labels derived from later historical periods, such as 'monastery', 'manor', 'village' or 'market' for undocumented sites (Whyman, 2002, 92-94 and Carver, 1989, 141-158). Overcoming these issues requires systematic work to be undertaken on a regional basis.

However, before we can develop a method for identifying and interpreting the likely variety of social identities hidden beneath the 'productive' site label, we first need to look more closely at a number of parallel developments in approaches to the survey, excavation and analysis of early medieval rural settlement sites. A hugely important point is that a number of problems in the interpretation of material culture profiles and settlement morphologies have *already* been confronted by archaeologists, discovering a number of useful solutions. The next step is that this thinking be linked to archaeological approaches to 'productive' sites in order reconstruct economies and lifestyles and to interpret social identities.

## Changing approaches to the archaeological interpretation of rural settlements and social change

### Settlement excavations and textual evidence

One of the fundamental reasons for *emporia*-centred thinking was that prior to the 1980s relatively few Anglo-Saxon settlements had been excavated and, prior to the 1960s, interpretations of 'settlement' were often based on the distribution of cemetery related material (Lucy, 1998, 5-1;, Webster, 1986, 123; Rahtz, 1976, 51). In addition, early excavations of Anglo-Saxon settlements, with limited methodologies, often failed to recover ephemeral evidence, such as timber halls (Sutton Courtenay, Berkshire; Leeds, 1923), resulting in an interpretation of Anglo-Saxon society with little conception of rural complexities.

However, during the 1950s advances in excavation techniques on the continent, such as open-area excavation, increased ability to obtain quality data from settlements (Tipper, 2004, 15). This led to seminal excavations, such as those undertaken at the 'royal palace' at Yeavering, Northumberland, between 1953 and 1962 (Hope-Taylor, 1977). Yeavering is an interesting case-study as the impressive settlement remains were quickly equated with *Ad Gefrin*, a royal site named in Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica*, despite the lack of abundant high status material culture, which was not recovered until the 1980s (Tinniswood and Harding, 1991). This practice demonstrates the precedence that historical frameworks of interpretation took over material evidence at this time, with archaeologists often tackling historically documented or stone-built structures already labelled as *monasteria* (e.g. Whitby, N.Yorks; Peers and Radford, 1947, and Jarrow, Co.Durham; Cramp, 1969).

The main problem with this 'textually-led' approach was that sites tended to be considered at a precise 'snapshot' in time, with a ready-formed elite presence taken for granted, and site development an underplayed theme (Loveluck, 2007a, 153-156). This meant that changes in settlement morphology were not linked to wider

social change and there was little systematic interrogation of portable material culture from the sites. This approach has perpetuated the view amongst historians that certain artefacts such as styli equate to ecclesiastical sites (Blair, 1996a, 97-121). In this type of analysis there is little room for considering that the changing character of portable material culture use (luxury goods or craftworking) might reflect key transformation at sites. Using this method, sites initially interpreted as secular royal centres have been relabelled as monastic sites (St. Peters, Northampton, Williams *et al*., 1985 or Cheddar, Somerset, Rahtz, 1979, Blair, 1996b, 6-18), citing Bede's description of 'false monasteries' involved in normal lay activities as well as religious life (John, 1960, 44), without a fuller assessment of the material evidence.

Disagreements between historians and archaeologists over classification of rural settlements were brought to a head during the 1990's with important excavations of Middle Anglo-Saxon settlements at Flixborough, Lincolnshire (**Fig. 4**; Loveluck, 2007b) and Brandon, Suffolk (**Fig.5**; Carr *et al*. 1988). Both settlements feature evidence for literacy in the form of writing styli, long-distance exchange and specialist craft working, but initial interpretations of these sites simply as 'monastic' (Blair, 1996a, 97-121), sat uncomfortably with the observed dynamics in the settlement sequences, including changing site-morphology during different occupation phases. At the settlement at Flixborough, for example, once a study of changing settlement morphology was combined with a study of *full* material culture profiles (pottery and animal bone) by phase, the site was found to have a sequence of occupation and settlement which changed from 'secular' in character during the Seventh to Eighth century, to a very different 'monastic' character during the Ninth century, before changing back to a secular centre in the Tenth century (Loveluck, 2007b, 155-156; **Fig. 4**). The discovery of a site that might equally be defined as a high status secular 'manor' or ecclesiastical 'monastery' at different times led archaeologists to question the exclusivity of particular material culture traits and structural profiles to 'monastic' sites. This realisation was compounded by the fact that this range of material classes was undoubtedly also found on monastic sites, although, in contrast, certain *documented* monastic sites such as that at Hartlepool, Teeside, seem to have had very different patterns of resource exploitation (as

evidenced by animal bone remains) to the secular phases at Flixborough (Loveluck 2007c, 207).

Overcoming inconsistent approaches to the classification of site types (Welch, 1985, 15) is now a key goal. It has recently been suggested that observed differences between many apparent early medieval rural settlement *types* can often be attributed to shortcomings in sample size and representativeness due to factors such as artefact preservation (Whyman, 2002, 150); rendering unsafe ideas of 'high status' and 'low status', let alone 'secular' and 'ecclesiastical'.

Indeed, if the documentary evidence for Anglo-Saxon England is reappraised, from the outset complex relationships between secular and ecclesiastical elites are visible (Yorke, 1999, 32). For example, the process of Conversion in the Seventh century was aimed initially at pagan royal elites (Blair 2005, 9), while during the Eighth century, there are cases where royal rights to military service or tribute from an estate were retained even though it was held by the church (Blair, 2005, 89-90).

Equally, texts should not stand unquestioned; they do not represent an objectively illuminated reality, and '...we underestimate at our peril the tight connection of medieval writing and power structures...' (Henning, 2008, 33). Certainly we cannot take it for granted that textually defined settlements will always match archaeologically defined social identities. Just as archaeologists informed by social theory request that we treat material as text (Moreland, 2001, 96-119), and use site taphonomy as a form of source criticism (Carver, 1994, 1), historians are also required to assess both conscious and unconscious expressions of social complexities in interpretation of texts (McCormick, 2008, 5). For example, certain Ninth century textual evidence seems to indicate increased formalisation of social hierarchy such as the acknowledgment of the 'three social orders' - those who work, those who fight and those who pray, all under the aegis of the king (Powell, 1994). However, if we consider other contemporary documentary evidence, a much more complex picture emerges. For example, a document entitled 'Of Peoples ranks and laws'

(Stubbs, 1890), thought to be composed at the time of Aethelred (c.1002-1023) (Whitelock, 1979, 468), states that:

‘ And if a ceorl throve, so that he had fully five hides of his own land, church, kitchen, bellhouse and burh-gate seat [fortified gatehouse], and special duty in the king’s hall, then was he henceforth of thegn-right worthy (Stubbs, 1890, 65.2)’

Furthermore, a later compliation of the same document, the Textus Roffensis (c.1140-50), goes on to say that:

‘And if a merchant throve, so that he fared thrice over the wide sea by his own means, then was he henceforth of thegn-right worthy (Stubbs, 1890, 65.5)’

This documentary evidence is extremely interesting as it implies, instead of rigid social strata as seen in the later medieval ‘three social orders’, that aspirational freemen might be able to achieve the equivalent of thegnly status through acquisition of socio-political links with the king. Furthermore, tenants and merchants, although not necessarily of landed class, could perhaps also attain a similar status. As a result, we must start to ask new questions of the historical documents. For example, it is possible that a document scribed directly for Anglo-Saxon rulers, such as Alfred, would portray social structure as desired by a monarch (i.e. more akin to the later medieval ‘three social orders’) (Powell, 1994, 105). In this way, the historical agenda is also re-orientated, and archaeologists can start to look at how these more complex documented social structures are reflected on the ground through evident complexities at excavated settlements. This observation is particularly pertinent to the further investigation of the ‘productive’ sites.

**Processual Models of settlement and social change**

Away from the textually-led paradigm, a number of parallel developments in the 1960s and 1970s moved archaeological enquiry away from the examination of

documented high-status/monastic sites into the exploration of undocumented rural settlements (Tipper, 2004, 16-17), such as Maxey, Northamptonshire (Addyman, 1964), Cowdery's Down, Hampshire (Millet and James, 1983), Mucking, Essex (Hamerow, 1993) and West Stow, Suffolk (West, 1985). A number of advances in the nature of fieldwork such as fieldwalking, aerial survey and geophysics, also allowed more sites to be captured (Chalton, Hampshire, Addyman, 1972; Champion 1977, see also Newman, 1992, 1994).

This work had a very different starting point, making more reference to the New Archaeology approaches, particularly those in the USA, which had moved away from historical context and instead emphasised the importance of cultural systems, designed research and sampling strategy (Binford 1972, 1983; Flannery, 1976). This resulted in a very different narration of settlement complexity and the potential emergence of elites. For example, models initially used in Human Geography and then by prehistorians and Romanists, such as Central Place Theory and numerous Core-Periphery models, were adopted for analysis (Hodder and Orton, 1976).

In Scandinavia and Britain, awareness developed of the potential for social-economic explanations to be derived from observations of changing settlement morphologies (Dickinson, 1983). For example, the work of Beresford and Hurst at Wharram Percy, Yorkshire (1954, 1971) combined evidence of *both* settlement morphology and material culture to suggest that changes in building styles and settlement location at deserted medieval villages might reflect wider socio-economic themes (Hurst and Beresford, 1990). Importantly, this study served to shift the focus of rural settlement studies from the high politics of kings and nobles to the bulk of the population - in medieval England the rural peasantry. In this approach the evidence for lifestyles at Anglo-Saxon settlements, such as pottery and animal remains became important for demonstrating that settlements were integrated into wider spheres of production, trade and environment (Clutton-Brock, 1976; Wilson 1976).

Perhaps the key model for the analysis of Anglo-Saxon settlement hierarchy in the late 1970s was that dubbed the *Middle Saxon Shuffle* (Hodges and Whitehouse, 1989, 62). This model argued that sprawling 'dispersed' Early Anglo-Saxon

settlements and adjacent cemeteries were replaced by new, nucleated, Middle Anglo-Saxon settlements located on richer soils in river valleys during the Seventh and Eighth centuries (**Fig.6**). This transformation was taken to represent the emergence of social stratification and the presence of elites in the Anglo-Saxon landscape (Arnold and Wardle, 1981, 145-9), and is a key point of analysis that deserves further consideration.

This model was heavily influenced by the excavation of Early Anglo-Saxon settlements at Mucking, Essex (**Fig.7**) and West Stow, Suffolk which came to be regarded as the 'dispersed' settlement type-sites (Richards, 1996). Both sites featured loose clusters of timber halls and sunken-featured buildings (interpreted as ancillary or craft working structures) with the replacement of these structures perhaps every twenty-five to fifty-years in slightly shifted positions, and apparently little evidence for bounded enclosures. This was interpreted as implying little pressure or restriction on land-use (Hamerow, 1993), which led to the opinion that there was a degree of co-operation and perhaps common ownership within the social group (Turner, 2003, 51). Material culture profiles at these sites were also regarded as largely functional and not indicative of a stratified society. This interpretive trend can be traced back to those scholars who, influenced by migration theories, drew direct links between the morphological trends of settlements found in England and those found on the continent, where architectural styles and settlement morphologies were seen to reflect an egalitarian or 'free' society during the Fifth to Seventh centuries (Hamerow, 1991, 171-173).

However, fundamental problems exist with the *Middle Saxon Shuffle* model. Firstly, vague notions of 'new landscape requirements' due to 'changing farming practices (*ibid* 147)' were cited as the sole factor behind the apparent settlement shift. Secondly, due to a lack of excavated evidence, the model was forced to draw heavily on place-name evidence to infer that new territorial land-units were created around new Middle Anglo-Saxon settlements. Thirdly, many commentators now suggest that, although social hierarchy might be hard to detect through Early Anglo-Saxon settlement layout, the status of individual communities is clearly reflected in

cemeteries (Lucy and Reynolds, 2002; Lucy, 2000a, 184-185). Perhaps unsurprisingly, the *Shuffle* model was also criticised for confusing a continual process of shifting settlement with a single event (Hamerow, 1991, 13). Yet its most fundamental problem was the limited use of select case-studies, which illustrate the model, to argue for a universal pattern of settlement evolution (Arnold and Wardle, 1981, 145-9).

**Regional Surveys**

If the settlement excavations of the 1970's had created large-scale islands of data that could not easily be compared (Rahtz, 1983, 12-23), a separate sub-discipline of archaeological field research had also started to circumvent certain issues of comparison between settlement foci. In particular, from the 1980s, surface finds (such as pottery) indicative of buried settlements and field systems were captured by fieldwalking and used to date and rank settlements (Aston and Gerrard, 1997; Newman, 1992). Further associated research focussed on the acceptable levels of archaeological inference from surface artefact scatters (Cogbill and Lane, 1985; Haselgrove, 1985; Orton, 2000), and the importance of regional surveys (Bintliff and Snodgrass, 1988).

During the 1980's and 1990's two important field surveys, one local and one regional, took place in East Anglia. The regional survey was the South East Suffolk element of an ambitiously designed East Anglia Kingdom Survey (Newman, 2006). The survey covered an area of 10 x 25 km centred on the Deben Valley, which served to place the burial ground at Sutton Hoo into a regional context (Newman, 1992). The extensive approach enabled Newman (1994), using scatters of Ipswich Ware pottery originating in the Seventh century, to suggest that earlier sites were abandoned in favour of new locations that attained some permanence (often around later medieval parish churches) in the latter part of the Seventh century; a pattern also noted in central Norfolk (Wade-Martins, 1980c, 84). A further phenomenon was the expansion and emergence of further new sites in the Ninth century after the

introduction of Thetford-type Ware pottery (Newman, 1994, **Fig.8**). The Kingdom survey results therefore seemed to corroborate the observations of settlement dislocation in the Seventh century, as identified at the excavated sites at West Stow and Mucking. Crucially, however, little attempt was made, except at Rendlesham (Newman, 1992), to look at the morphology of the artefact scatters or use metal artefacts to address questions of site status. Because of this, a number of questions concerning the reasons for observed settlement evolution were not directly addressed.

In contrast, a local parish-based field survey at Witton, Northeast Norfolk, although not offering an opportunity to compare numerous settlement foci, was highly successful in using changing pottery scatters to identify and interpret the developing morphology of a rural settlement of uncertain status (probably a secondary estate centre of some form) between 400 and 1200 AD (Lawson, 1983, 76-77). The survey demonstrated that instead of a huge transition from 'dispersed' to 'nucleated', the agricultural land under exploitation around the settlement actually remained reasonably stable, increasing from 40 hectares in the Early Anglo-Saxon period to 150 hectares in the Late Anglo-Saxon period (Lawson, 1983; **Fig.9**). Unfortunately, although there was some ad hoc excavation of Early Anglo-Saxon structures at Witton, fieldwork was undertaken prior to the widespread use of metal detectors. Because of this, there were no metal artefacts available to provide a window onto changing patterns of consumption and exchange/trade at the settlement, resulting in a limited overall interpretation of the settlement.

By the 1980's then, field survey had started to observe key transformations in both settlement patterns and phases of land-use at early medieval settlements. Unfortunately, work such as the East Anglian Kingdom Survey, perpetuated the theory that dispersed settlements prone to large-scale shift were replaced by stable central places in the Seventh century (Hamerow, 2002, 121-124). Most frustratingly, field survey reports frequently restricted themselves to the empirical description of settlement pattern or site morphology instead of providing social interpretations for those observed phenomena.

**Current Approaches: Settlement Morphologies as a reflection of social identities and social change**

One excavation that added notable to debates about settlement stability was that at of the Fifth to Seventh century settlement at West Heslerton, Yorkshire (Powlesland, 2000). Here, detailed analysis indicated that, although habitation was spatially extensive, the settlement was actually far more stable and static, incorporating numerous boundary features, than might have been expected if the 'Mucking' model was followed (Powlesland, 1997). Another site, at Godmanchester, Cambridgeshire, although of an early date and apparently rooted in subsistence, featured a series of enclosures, interpreted as livestock rearing areas, in addition to Sunken Featured Buildings (Gibson, 2003, 137-217). The settlement at Carlton Coleville, Suffolk also fits this model (Lucy *et al*., 2009). Some other key changes now observed at settlements include the conscious and symbolic alignment of buildings as at Foxley, Wiltshire (Hinchcliffe, 1986), Chalton, Hampshire (Champion, 1977) and the enclosure of existing residential units with boundaries as at Thirlings, Northumberland (O'Brien and Miket, 1991).

Furthermore, certain settlements, such as West Stow, Suffolk, originally interpreted as 'dispersed', upon reappraisal seem to feature at least one major reorganisation of space during their occupation. At West Stow, a new-style enclosure, dated by Ipswich Ware pottery, was dug in the Seventh century (West, 1985, 160-1; **Fig.10**). Similarly, at the excavated settlement at Pennyland, Buckinghamshire the site underwent a major reorganisation from a dispersed settlement of the Sixth century, comprising five sunken featured buildings to, by the late Sixth to Seventh centuries, a settlement with enclosures and droveways as well as timber halls and four sunken featured buildings (Williams, 1993).

All the above case-studies, in contrast to the traditional models, suggest that settlements occupied between the Fifth and Seventh centuries could be both stable

and enclosed, or feature a degree of reorganisation of space defined by boundaries over time. A similarly diverse picture of settlement evolution is now emerging on the continent (Loveluck, 2005, 230-232). The introduction of boundaries and the accompanying possibility of stability at a range of early settlements is extremely important, given that it is suggested that the appearance of boundary features might represent the '...imposition and growth of new forms of social relationship...' (Saunders 2000, 216-217). For example, at Cowdery's Down, Hampshire, a Sixth to Seventh century settlement incorporating structures demarcated by presumed property boundaries gained, in the last phase of land-use, a palisade boundary that enclosed a building that was somewhat larger and of innovative construction in comparison to its predecessors (Millet and James, 1983; **Fig.11**). This has been interpreted by Saunders (1991) as a boundary demarcating a secular elite focus.

Yet, although it is now clear that there was no 'simple to complex' transformation of rural settlements and settlement patterns from 'dispersed' to 'nucleated' in Anglo-Saxon England, it *is* generally accepted that there was at least a measure of landscape reorganisation and an increased range of settlement types between the Seventh and Eleventh centuries AD (Whyman, 2002, 92). Instead, it is now also argued that changing settlement morphologies might be used to differentiate between settlements of different character, and perhaps identify early elite centres (both secular and ecclesiastical) (Loveluck, 2007a, 189).

Between the Sixth and Ninth centuries, Reynolds (2003) has noted the emergence of a range of settlement morphologies. In addition to 'standard' rural settlements based on more organic enclosures perhaps initially defined by droveways as at Riby Crossroads, Lincolnshire (Steedman, 1994, 212-306; **Fig. 12**), there are also sub-circular *de novo* enclosed settlement types, reflecting ecclesiastical enclosures as at Bampton, Oxfordshire (Blair, 1998, 124-30) and secular enclosures, interpreted both as manorial foci at Goltho, Lincolnshire (Beresford, 1987) or perhaps settlements of freemen like Brampton, Suffolk (Reynolds, 1999, 144; Loveluck, 2009, 3; **Fig. 13**). Whilst, between the Ninth and Twelfth centuries settlement morphologies reflective

of manorial sites, regular village type plots and bounded cemeteries are more easily identifiable, for example, the site at Raunds, Northamptonshire (Boddington, 1996).

Another important type of settlement morphology that emerges between the Sixth and Ninth centuries is the 'rectilinear settlement' (after Reynolds, 2003). Boundaries are an important feature of these settlements, with sites planned around large linear ditches which develop into linear plot arrangements, for example, the excavated high status settlements in East Anglia; at Wicken Bonhunt, Essex (Wade, 1980; **Fig.14**) and North Elmham, Norfolk (Wade Martins, 1980a and b) interpreted respectively as a secular and an ecclesiastical focus. Interestingly both these sites had dynamic settlement sequences, with boundary alignments altering over time. At Wicken Bonhunt, for example, the site was provisionally interpreted as changing during its occupation from a Middle Anglo-Saxon centre under royal patronage, to a spatially shifted agriculturally based settlement of the Late Anglo-Saxon period, to a low status focus, perhaps serving a manor house located elsewhere (Wade, 1980, 102). The potential for sites with common morphological features to be interpreted in contrasting ways should therefore serve as a cautionary addendum to classifications based on settlement morphologies alone.

Recent work has also shown that, as time progresses, the increased social trend towards enclosing space at rural settlements results in a number of common features on sites. Firstly, the superimposition of structures becomes a particular feature, for example, at the Seventh to Tenth century settlement at Flixborough, N. Lincolnshire (Loveluck, 1998, 2001, 2007b). Secondly, the long-term use of the same building plots results in a greater need to organise activities and refuse disposal within settlements. At some sites we see an increasing use of private household features, such as wells and cess-pits, for waste disposal, for example, North Elmham (Powlesland, 1997; Marshall and Marshall, 1991) or Dorney, Maidenhead, Berkshire (Hiller *et al.,* 2002, 60). Similar waste disposal practices are also observed at *emporia* such as *Hamwic*-Southampton (Andrews 1997, 174–187), Lincoln (Perring 1981, 8–18) and York (Kemp 1996; Dobney *et al.,* 2000, 134–135). In contrast, at some settlements the digging of refuse pits seems to have been rarely undertaken, as at

Flixborough (Loveluck, 2007b, 157-158). At these sites, normal practice seems to have been the creation of surface rubbish middens. It is suggested that contrasting waste-disposal strategies might reflect specific living arrangements at sites. For example, the presence of pits might reflect the existence of private space controlled by a household, while the use of surface middens might suggest communal living arrangements (Reynolds, 2003, 130). Furthermore, changes in refuse disposal patterns might reflect important social transformations (Loveluck, 2007b, 71-72).

The above discussion of settlement morphologies has demonstrated that there has been a blurring of the once 'clear' distinctions between dispersed and enclosed or nucleated settlements. Secondly, if we accept that the introduction of boundaries and changes to functional zones at settlements reflects wider social transformations (Reynolds, 2003, 130), questions of 'settlement shift' become subsidiary to the more important point of explaining *why* these dynamic changes are happening within the rural landscape: because of the emergence of diverse social groups between the Sixth and Twelfth centuries.

## Conclusions and research agenda: Towards an archaeology of social identities from early medieval lifestyles, 450-1100 AD

This chapter has surveyed a number of important conceptual themes and previous approaches that will allow for a more informed study of the changing social identities of the coastal settlements of West Norfolk between 450 and 1100 AD to be undertaken. Three main areas were covered.

Firstly, a consideration of the study of social identities demonstrated that an archaeological study must consider the possibility that communities and individuals might define and express materially both their collective and individual identities in a

number of different ways according to the sphere of interaction that was being pursued (Tilley, 1994, 16-19).

The work of Bourdieu (1977, 1990) and Giddens (1979, 1984), and their concepts of agency and *habitus*, provide us with a conceptual 'toolkit' for the analysis of these individual and collective expressions of social identity. Essentially, we can now acknowledge that an artefact or a settlement site is created by an individual or a community with a specific cultural background and societal principles that structure both their conscious and unconscious actions (Johnson, 2007, 142). Examination of these structuring principles is the main way in which the material evidence from West Norfolk will subsequently be explored in this thesis. Importantly, however, it was also highlighted that different parts of the archaeological record illustrate different facets of social identities. In the words of Carver, 'If economic information is incorporated in the layers of midden heap, political meaning is most likely to be embedded in sites and objects of high investment and public access' (Carver, 2001, 2). It is important to acknowledge that particular determinants within social identities important to this thesis, such as status and ethnicity, might be more readily explored through portable material culture rather than settlement morphologies.

The second part of this chapter then looked at changing approaches to the study of early medieval economy and identity in rural areas, incorporating a consideration of 'productive' sites. It was concluded that the seminal substantivist approaches, such as Hodges' *Dark Age Economics* (1982), had seen the economic role of both individuals and communities (regions) as both an intrinsic aspect of social identity and the main driving force behind social change. Within this, there was a tendency to view rural economies within a model of royal control centred on the emporia, underplaying the potential for other aspects of social identities, such as status, ethnicity and power.

Yet, at a theoretical level at least, Moreland (amongst others) has already portrayed a more dynamic rural landscape of production and consumption that was not solely

controlled by documented royal elites (Moreland, 2000b, 69). Particularly in coastal landscapes, it is now felt that social groups outside strict elite control might define their social identities in relation to their occupation/work in quite different ways to social groups in inland zones (Loveluck and Tys, 2006, 142). These contrasts might equally apply to material expressions of status and ethnicity. Increasingly, there is a feeling that tiers of society such as merchants and free peasants, who might not necessarily be classified as elites (Loveluck, 2009, 3), had an important entrepreneurial role to play in the development of certain early medieval economies and societies. For example, in Carolingian Europe only certain trade was controlled by ecclesiastical/secular elites (Verhulst, 2002, 88), while in Scandinavia, the 'self directed' acts of merchants, who accumulated wealth from long distance trade at a variety of locations, provided pre conditions for the emergence of urban settlement foci (Sindbaek, 2007, 119).

Fortunately, the discovery of the 'productive' sites now provides an opportunity for the variety of rural centres, indicative of contrasting social groups involved in trade and exchange, to be more fully explored in Anglo-Saxon England. Unfortunately, there has rarely been an opportunity to explore 'productive' sites in a systematic way. Yet, there is already a tendency towards the generic interpretation of sites as regional centres with *trade* as their primary function (Ulmschneider 2002, 2000b, 104). As a result, the interaction of potentially contrasting modes of exchange (socially embedded exchange, mercantile trade or even dual economies) at these sites, which might reflect a diverse range of social identities, is poorly understood. Because of this, it is still possible for Hodges, while acknowledging the important role that 'productive' sites must have played within the early medieval economy, to regard them as conservative residences of minor secular or ecclesiastical elites who remained at the mercy of a command economy exercised by royal elites at the *emporia* (Hodges, 2006, 16; 2008).

So, instead of pursuing the investigative methodologies currently prevalent for Anglo-Saxon 'productive' sites, the third part of this chapter returned to earlier detailed work undertaken on early medieval rural settlements (excavation) and

settlement patterns (field survey). This highlighted some key developments that have already helped to reveal something of the true diversity of rural settlement sites and, by extrapolation, material expressions of social identities. Firstly, it was pointed out that archaeologists have realised that, instead of attributing assumptive labels to undocumented settlements (e.g. manor or monastery), documentary evidence itself reveals a much more complex and dynamic relationship between secular and ecclesiastical elites (Yorke, 1999, 32) that might then be visible on the ground.

Secondly, generalising models of settlement transformation (i.e. from dispersed to nucleated and from simple to complex), have now been broken down by the results of excavation and field survey. This serves as a warning for over-generalising approaches to the interpretation of 'productive' sites, but also places new emphasis on attempting to understand functional zones at rural settlements if we are to fully appreciate social identities. In particular, if we accept that the imposition of boundaries at settlements and shifts in functional zones reflect the '...imposition and growth of new forms of social relationships...' (Saunders, 2000, 216), then the diversity of boundary morphologies surveyed by Reynolds (2003) perhaps reflecting the emergence of a number of different of contrasting social identities existed, including societal elites.

Perhaps most importantly (although we have focussed so far on settlement morphologies alone) work at excavated settlements such as Flixborough, by combining observations of settlement morphologies and material culture profiles by archaeological phase, can identify important *transformations* within rural elites to be identified at a single settlement focus (Loveluck 1998, 146-61; 2007b). Furthermore, although the opportunity to utilise a stratigraphic sequence of Flixborough's quality is extremely rare, and unstratified data from 'productive' sites clearly cannot be used with the same precision, on the rare occasion where it has been possible to explore 'productive' sites on a more intensive basis, for example Cottam (E. Yorks) (Richards, 1999, 2003).

At Cottam, fieldwalking, metal detecting and geophysical survey demonstrated that surface finds of metalwork and pottery closely reflected the location of areas of intensively bounded, buried settlement (**Fig. 15**). Later, excavations also demonstrated that a northern settlement focus, Cottam B, shifts slightly in location during the Tenth century, with an 'Anglian' enclosure being replaced by an 'Anglo-Scandinavian' one. This morphological shift was also reflected by the distribution of surface finds of pottery and metalwork from the site (Richards, 2003, 160–1; Haldenby and Richards 2009, 309–14). This demonstrates that it might be possible, even on plough-truncated sites subjected solely to survey or limited excavations, to reveal something of the *changing* character of rural social identities. As a result, just as our new appreciation that a critique of the principles which structure individual and collective actions (as expressed materially) provides an 'ideal' conceptual method to successfully interpret social identities, so the acknowledgment that social transformations are the norm at early medieval rural centres, and that these might be captured by field survey at 'productive' sites, is now equally important to this thesis.

**Moving forward: regional studies and material culture profiles**

So, in conclusion, we have now almost arrived at a conceptual method for studying the changing social identities of early medieval coastal settlements via an informed investigation of 'productive' sites. However, one fundamental project remains before we can design a detailed method for the investigation of specific sites (Chapter 4).

It was concluded above that that the most successful interpretations of individual rural sites, such as Flixborough, combined a study of both settlement morphologies and *material culture profiles* to observe transformations in social identities over time (Loveluck 1998, 146-61; 2007b). However, narration of settlement history was only so highly successful because detailed site based observations, such as changing patterns in the agricultural economy (animal bones), was *compared* to wider patterns at a regional level (e.g. Dobney *et al*., 2007, 141).

This is a very important point. Naylor (2007), for example, has demonstrated that at some points in time the circulation of early medieval coinage is abundant on a regional basis and therefore finds at individual sites might be considered less indicative of elevated status. In contrast, at other times coinage is scarce and the reverse might be the case. Extending this observation, the regional circulation of every different material class is also likely to reflect different aspects of changing social identities. Therefore, unless we look at the regional distribution of various material classes and see how these change over time, it is presently impossible to see just how exceptional (or otherwise) the material culture profiles at individual case-study sites are. This is a criticism that could be levelled at the present investigation of certain 'productive' sites.

It is therefore evident that to appreciate the significance of the changing patterns of settlement morphology and lifestyles at individual sites, we first need to understand changing patterns of material culture use and settlement at a regional level, before linking the results from individual sites to wider social themes

By looking at rural settlements and associated evidence for lifestyles (portable material classes) at a regional level, Chapter 3 will hopefully allow for us to challenge the older models of strict royal control over trade/exchange and instead, using the conceptual frameworks as provided by Bourdieu and Giddens, look at the conscious and unconscious acts that have produced distribution patterns. Particularly in a coastal region with contrasting landscape zones, such as West Norfolk, extensive distributions of material culture might, in some way, reflect contrasting patterns of exchange and therefore the diversity of people's socio-economic lives.

# Chapter 3: Material Culture and Settlement in Norfolk and West Norfolk: a critical analysis of the data

## Introduction

The previous chapter demonstrated that the archaeological recovery of early medieval settlement morphologies, when matched to appropriate theoretical frameworks, enables important interpretations to be made about transformations observed at these sites. Material culture evidence indicative of different aspects of 'lifestyles', of social relations ( trade, exchange, social affiliation or occupation) is also frequently recovered from excavated and surveyed sites. If material culture is analysed by stratigraphic phase, changing patterns of production and consumption (material culture profiles) can indicate transformations in the way settlements were integrated into local and regional economies (Whyman, 2002, 150). As has been argued, economic lifestyles might have been intrinsically linked to both individual and group identities.

However, a fundamental barrier to a clearer understanding of individual case-studies concerns our knowledge of what form the local and regional economies might actually have taken. Particularly in a rural context, detailed excavation of high quality stratigraphic sequences are a rare occurrence, and can therefore only offer highly localised insight into settlement history (Bintliff, Kun and Venclova, 2000, 1). To combat this, the following chapter explores the idea that the regional distribution of material culture and settlement, although frequently represented by imprecise surface find data, not only reveals the location of probable settlements, but might also allow us to interpret many changing aspects of rural lifestyles including patterns

of local and regional economies, social affiliations and identities. Nowhere is this opportunity more apparent than in West Norfolk.

This chapter is necessarily selective in its treatment of data. Throughout, the central aim is to provide a satisfactory research context for the more detailed work in Chapters 5 - 11, allowing material culture from individual sites to be interpreted against wider social and economic contexts. To this end, the chapter is broken down into a number of specific sections. Firstly, overall distribution patterns in the West Norfolk study area are discussed by period. Following this consideration of West Norfolk distributions, patterns and key themes observable within specific artefact groups (primarily pottery, coins and metalwork) are interpreted. To bring out key interpretative points, the individual artefact groups are analysed at a mixture of spatial scales relating to both Norfolk and West Norfolk. Distribution maps are also supported by some quantitative analysis using graphs. The main data source for this chapter is the Norfolk Historic Environment Record (NHER) database (**Fig. 16**). Finally, excavated settlements in Norfolk are then discussed to demonstrate how further material categories and observed aspects of morphology can contribute to an interpretation of settlement diversity and transformations over time.

## West Norfolk Distributions

**Figs. 16-26**

In contrast to many sub-regions of Britain, Early Anglo-Saxon material (**Fig.17**) is well distributed throughout West Norfolk. Findspots of pottery and metalwork, as with preceding periods, are concentrated on the north-south aligned Western Escarpment, between the Fifth and Seventh centuries (Gregory, 1982, Rogerson, 1993, 38). In this area, later parish boundaries are east-west aligned, and it has been speculated that this arrangement might have been formalised as early as the Roman period so that villa estates might take advantage of a full mixed farming economy (Lyons, 2004), a phenomenon noted in other parts of the country, such as Cumbria (Loveluck, 2002, 13) and Northumbria (Higham, 1986, 243-247). Along the Western

Escarpment it is just possible to imagine a number of Early Anglo-Saxon estate centres as envisaged by Carver (1989, 157), although at present surface signatures relating specifically to settlement are hard to distinguish (see sections on Pottery and Metalwork below, p. 94-110 and 125-136). This notion is further reinforced by the early –*ham* place-names located along this activity corridor. It might also be corroborated by the evidence of pollen samples taken in Norfolk which suggest that there was not a huge re-growth of woodland areas in the immediate Post-Roman centuries implying continuity in agricultural production (Williamson, 1993, 53).

The river valleys of the Burn, Heacham, Ingol and Babingley also seem to represent important activity foci, although, in the case of the Heacham River, this might be partly a product of concentrated fieldwork (Cabot et al, 2004, 322). The course of the prehistoric routeway, the Icknield Way, might also have provided impetus for settlement, although the route cannot be ascertained with any certainty (Lewton-Brain, 1965, Harrison, 2003, 1-22).

Early Anglo-Saxon activity in the fenland is virtually absent. The only, probably temporarily occupied, activity focus is as at Tilney St Lawrence (Crowson et al. 2005, 55). It is, however, possible that later medieval silts might have obscured some earlier settlement evidence. In contrast, along the fen-edge a significant area of both pottery and metalwork loss is located on the slightly elevated land parcel between the Rivers Nar, Wissey and Nene, although activity in the vicinity of Barton Bendish might only seem elevated because it has been systematically surveyed (Rogerson, 1997). This area was linked to the remainder of Norfolk by the pre-existing east-west aligned Roman routeway, the Fen Causway (Gurney, 2005, 28).

It has been speculated that the Nar-Wissey-Nene land parcel, and the Feltwell area to the south, represent a putative territorial unit (Rogerson, 1997, 18), namely the province of the Wissa, mentioned by Felix in his Eighth Century *Life of St Guthlac*, but not included in the Seventh century *Tribal Hidage* (Higham, 1993, 115-8). This 'territory' is framed by the partially extant Bitchamditch (or Devils Dyke) and Fossditch to the east - both ditches are post-Roman in date (Scull, 1992, 6). The early

importance of the area is further indicated by a dense concentration of –*ham* place names, which are thought to indicate primary areas of occupation (Penn *et al*, 2007, 111). It has been suggested that the absence of the Wissa from the *Tribal Hidage* is due to its loss of independence to an expanding Kingdom of East Anglia (Rogerson, 1997, 17). If this is the case then the distribution of Early Anglo-Saxon material here might be the only remaining reflection of a distinct sub-regional identity.

In common with Early Anglo-Saxon material, Middle Anglo-Saxon pottery and metalwork loss is abundant, reflecting extensive occupation and settlement (**Fig.18**). As with the preceding period, where a significant quantity of Middle Anglo-Saxon pottery is found, metalwork is invariably also recovered, suggesting that similar circuits of activities produced both distributions. By far the widest range of metalwork is lost in the Western Escarpment 'estate centre' zone, perhaps indicating a significant degree of continuity between first-choice Early to Middle Anglo-Saxon settlement locations (**Fig.18**). This sits uncomfortably with generalising models of settlement-shift during the Seventh century (Williamson, 1993, 90-91). In this light, the significance of early pottery sherds at predominantly Middle Anglo-Saxon sites could be reconsidered, for example, at Barton Bendish (Rogerson, 1997, 42). Other metal artefact groups feature further contrasting loss patterns, for example, styli are lost exclusively along the Western escarpment 'estate centre' zone, whilst coinage is additionally lost on the Fen Edge (**Fig. 19**, see p.113 below).

Perhaps the most significant transformation in finds distribution between the Early and the Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon periods is the apparent colonisation of much of the fen-edge and Fenland for the first time. Along the fen-edge, pottery and metalwork findspots corresponding with secondary place-names (for instance *ton* settlements such as Grimston, Gayton and east Walton) perhaps indicate the exploitation of marginal locations (Rippon, 2009, 188). In addition, the Fenland survey revealed at least seven sites within the Fenland proper in a broad arc from Wiggenhall St Mary (east) to Walsoken (west) (Silvester, 1988, 158). The distribution of these sites corresponds closely to the Anglo-Saxon coastline (**Fig.20**; Hall and Coles, 1994, Crowson et al, 2005, 28).

The Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon fen-edge 'pioneer' sites are key to our understanding of Anglo-Saxon settlement in West Norfolk. These sites seem to be regularly spaced in the landscape along a network of dry silt islands (roddons) (Crowson et al, 2005, 70). The fact that a number of surface artefact scatters are extensive and of a limited range artefactually (animal bone, pottery and undated briquetage) has led to the suggestion that these sites represent specialist producer sites (Hamerow, 2002, 125), perhaps involved in the raising of cattle and butchery (Baker, 2002, Baker in Crowson et al, 2005, 228). Indeed, items such as animal bones and briquetage (often undated) do appear concentrated in the Fenland (**Fig. 21**.). Unfortunately, this pattern is certainly a product of favourable recovery, as the fen sites are the only ones sampled by trial excavation (Crowson et al, 2005).

The regular spacing of the fen sites, combined with evidence for intense pastoral exploitation (perhaps including meat production) and possible salt extraction, has led to the suggestion that the post-Roman resettlement of the fen-edge was structured from above by the upland estates under royal control (Rogerson, 2005, 32; Silvester, 1988, 158). A key question to ask of the Fenland sites is whether they were controlled exclusively by Royal estates (Rogerson, 2005, 32-33), or whether they might represent either controlled or entrepreneurial responses to the existence of a variety of estate centres, including other monastic or aristocratic interests (see Chapter 11).

During the Middle Anglo-Saxon period, pottery is also found with increasing frequency in the upland 'interior' parishes, suggesting settlement expansion into these areas (**Fig. 20**). A pattern largely confirmed in the Late Anglo-Saxon period by both pottery (**Fig. 22**) and metalwork (**Fig. 23**), suggesting, at a macro-scale at least, a consolidation of the Middle Anglo-Saxon settlement pattern. Apparent Late Anglo-Saxon continuities of land-use are interesting as there was certainly a huge amount of political transformation throughout the Ninth and Tenth centuries, including Danish rule between 878 and 913, and we might have expected settlement patterns to reflect these changes in some way. Instead, it seems that we might have to look in

more detail at individual settlements with Late Anglo-Saxon phases to appreciate the more subtle morphological transformations during the Ninth to Tenth centuries.

By the Late Anglo-Saxon period the distribution of certain material culture allows for a degree of settlement variety and perhaps specialisation to be suggested. For example, although items of copper alloy are lost in all landscape zones, functional iron items (such as tools) are restricted to the Western escarpment 'estate centre' zone and notably absent from the Fenland sites (**Fig. 24**). Interestingly, Iron finds were also absent from Fenland sites in Lincolnshire (Crowson et al, 2005, 294), and it might be speculated that it represents a scarce commodity in this landscape zone, and was thus recycled, in contrast to the western escarpment where discard was permitted.

In contrast, Late Anglo-Saxon horse equipment, traditionally associated with high-status thegnly activity (see below), is lost in the Fenland as well as in inland areas (**Fig. 25**). This suggests that this artefact class is more a reflection of movement through the landscape as opposed to settlements, as postulated by Williams (1997). Interestingly, Late Anglo-Saxon weights and balances are not restricted to inland areas perhaps reflecting transactions in all landscape zones (**Fig. 26**). This might have implications when considering the degree of economic control exerted by central 'royal' authority over the fenland sites (Hutcheson, 2006, 75-77). However, before we can interpret distribution patterns and sites further, we need to understand what the different material classes found at the sites actually represent.

## Pottery

### Early Anglo-Saxon Pottery

Early Anglo-Saxon handmade pottery, which emerges during the Fifth century, needs to be treated with caution when re-constructing patterns of settlement and economy. It is highly friable, frequently remaining unidentified during surface survey (Rogerson, 1997, 1) and, when undecorated, can only be placed into broad relative

chronologies by associating excavated ceramics with art styles on contemporary metalwork (Lucy, 2000a, 52-54) or by studying transformation in vessel forms by archaeological phase (Arnold, 1997, 91, Tipper, 2004). In Norfolk, Iron Age and Middle Anglo-Saxon undecorated pottery is frequently mistaken for Early Anglo-Saxon material because of the common clay source (Friedenson, Friedenson and Rickett, 1995, 126; Rogerson, 1999, 126; Davies and Williamson, 1999, 11).

Fortunately, the adoption of stamped decoration in the Fifth and Sixth centuries (Hamerow, 1993, 52), means that certain ceramics can be more readily identified. Unfortunately, the excavation of many Fifth-Seventh century cemeteries, for example, Spong Hill, Central Norfolk, has demonstrated that a large proportion of cremation urns were decorated (Hills, 1988, Rickett, 1995, 127). This means that surface finds of decorated pottery are quite likely to represent ploughed-out cremation cemeteries (as indicated by Penn, 2007, 101-110, Fig 9.1) and might therefore be an unreliable tool for mapping settlement locations. Nevertheless, it has also been argued that there is often a close relationship between the distribution of cremation cemeteries and Early Anglo-Saxon settlements, for example, in the Upper Thames Valley, Oxfordshire (Blair, 1994, 9). Furthermore, in some cases, Early Anglo-Saxon surface pottery scatters certainly *do* represent buried settlements (Lawson, 1983). As Chapter 2 mentioned, at Witton in NE Norfolk it was possible to distinguish between areas of occupation and cultivation, demonstrating that between 450-650 AD the Anglo-Saxon landscape was less intensively exploited than in later periods (Wade, 1983, 74-75).

It has been argued that decorated Early Anglo-Saxon pottery was used to mark allegiance to undocumented ethnic or cultural affiliations (Williamson, 1993, 65-66). We might therefore eventually hope to use observed distribution patterns of decorated pottery to interpret differentiated social identities (Blinkhorn, 1997, 113) and exchange contacts at settlements (Myres, 1977). However, most early Anglo-Saxon pottery is traditionally portrayed as having been produced or distributed for localised 'household' consumption only (Wickham, 2005, 806-7). Indeed, pottery containing matching die stamps, such as the Illington-Lackford group found at East

Anglian settlements, has been interpreted as evidencing the movement of an itinerant potter and not the involvement of settlements in wider exchange networks (Myres, 1969, 132-133).

Imported pottery (occasional cremation urns aside), which naturally provides evidence for the existence of wider economic networks, is restricted at this stage. At Mucking in Essex, for example, of a pottery assemblage of c. 32, 000 sherds, only 17 were Frankish wheel-thrown imports (Hamerow, 1993). Indeed, it is only with the emergence of distinctive chaff-tempered wares in South East England during the Sixth-Seventh century (a method of manufacture also found in Flanders) that we are provided with some speculative scope for researching exchange networks (Hamerow, Hollevoet and Vince, 1994, 1-18; Piton, 1993). In conclusion Early Anglo-Saxon pottery in West Norfolk might presently be considered more appropriate for simply locating sites and interpreting burial practice instead of allowing for the interpretation of exchange patterns and economic identities at settlements.

**Middle Anglo-Saxon Pottery**

Fortunately, the Middle Anglo-Saxon period provides much better opportunities to identify settlements and reconstruct regional economies. This is due to the emergence of diagnostic ceramics, including regional imports (or non-local wares) (Brown, 2003, 21) and occasional continental imports, concurrent with the cessation of burials accompanied by grave goods by c. 700 AD, allowing for the easier identification of settlement evidence (Rogerson, 2005, 32).

*Local wares and Ipswich Ware*

The homogenous nature of most Middle Anglo-Saxon handmade pottery makes establishing fabric-groups near impossible without scientific analysis. However, an important petrological and distributional analysis of East Midland pottery fabrics suggested that between c. 650-750 there were few signs of regional barriers to

contact, with a particular emphasis on river based exchange (Young and Vince, 2009, 393). However, by far the best opportunity for reconstructing patterns of regional exchange lies with Ipswich Ware.

Ipswich Ware, the first post-Roman ware manufactured on an industrial scale (Cowie and Blackmore, 2008, 181), is a slow wheel thrown sandy hard grey ware, first identified in the 1930's (Hurst, 1959). Ipswich Ware was initially thought to originate in the later Seventh century on the basis of association with artefacts on rural sites such as West Stow, Suffolk (West, 1985, 137-8, West, 2001, 28-32). More recently, a dating scheme of c.720- 850 has been suggested (Blinkhorn pers comm.), based on the fact that Ipswich Ware does not appear in the grave fills of furnished burials in Ipswich which cease around c.700 AD (Geake, 1997, 89-90). The high visibility of Ipswich Ware is the main reason that the observed phenomena of settlement nucleation, as discussed in Chapter 2, has been attributed to the Eighth century in Norfolk (e.g. Wade Martins, 1980c, 84).

Ipswich Ware is particularly important for reconstructing patterns of regional exchange, as petrological analysis has indicated that the pots were produced exclusively within Ipswich or its immediate environs (Blinkhorn, 1999, 9). Thus, findspots of Ipwsich Ware provide a '...reliable indicator of contact, direct or otherwise with the *wic*...' (Blinkorn, 2009, 356). This provides a rare opportunity to observe the distribution of an artefact class from a known point of origin outwards, an obstacle for the interpretation of other Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon ceramic types such as Maxey Wares and Lincolnshire Shelly Wares (Young and Vince, 2009, 339-401).

Traditional arguments have suggested that the production of Ipswich Ware was undertaken under strict control, with artisans working under royal elites at the *emporia* (Wade, 1988). Within this model, rural sites are directly linked to the fortunes of the *emporia* (Astill, 1985). This can be contrasted with the 'household' mode of manufacture and distribution suggested for earlier ceramics (Brown, 2003, 25). Beyond the kingdom of East Anglia, finds of Ipswich Ware (particularly the less

frequent pitcher forms) have been interpreted as high-status finds linked to elite control (Blackmore, 2002).

A recent interpretation of the evidence for West Norfolk continued to argue that the distribution of Ipswich Ware was a monopoly controlled by royal elites with little scope for profit from the sale of the pottery (Hutcheson, 2006, 86). Hutcheson (2006, 80) suggested that Ipswich Wares at rural sites in West Norfolk represented an elite taxation or 'food-rent' on lower order settlements by a multi tiered secular and ecclesiastical elite answerable to Ipswich. The pots arrived empty at rural settlements from Ipswich and were then re-distributed full of commodities that left no residue, such as salt (Blinkhorn, pers comm.) to elite sites. The basis of this argument is that Ipswich Ware forms are dominated by jars which could have functioned as standardised containers (Blinkhorn, 1989, 16) and perhaps also performed a social function, reminding producers of an Ipswich-based elite identity (Hutcheson, 2006, 86).

However, the sheer abundance of Ipswich Ware in East Anglia, where findspots have now been made in most Norfolk parishes (Rogerson, 2005, 33), has led Blinkhorn to argue for the possible presence of a 'market economy' by the Eighth century, where, if the production of Ipswich Ware was strictly controlled, its distribution might not have been (Blinkhorn, 1999, 9). Following Blinkhorn's argument, even though other scholars have argued strongly against commercial exchange at this date (Theuws, 2001, 206), some form of commodity exchange involving Ipswich Ware transactions should not be ruled out. Furthermore, the fen-edge 'producer' sites in West Norfolk, associated with large surface assemblages of Ipswich Ware (Crowson et al, 2005) - implying use and discard of vessels at the sites - are not necessarily easy to explain within a model of strict elite control of ceramic distribution and re-distribution. Why is the pottery lost here and not at recipient centres on inland estate centres? At this stage we should perhaps remind ourselves of the possibility that successful rural economies might pre-date the *emporia* (Moreland, 2000b), and that Ipswich Ware might actually represent the one remaining visible element of a pre-existing system of exchange. This notion is supported in West Norfolk by the presence of pre-Ipswich

Ware Middle Anglo-Saxon contexts (containing solely handmade fabrics) at Sedgeford (Faulkner, pers comm.).

If we cannot necessarily see the distribution of Ipswich Ware exclusively in a context of strict elite control from the *emporia* what model can replace this? Loveluck (2010/11, 13), contrasting the far greater quantity of Ipswich Ware found at a number of different types of site within ten kilometres of the Humber estuary with the small amount of Ipswich Ware collected from the *emporia* at York and its hinterland, has suggested the existence of different exchange networks. These were characterised as a system of unregulated exchange operating via the coast and a system of elite controlled exchange at York, even though the same seafaring merchants may have been involved in both networks (Loveluck 2010/11, 13). This might also be the case with West Norfolk, on the periphery of the kingdom of East Anglia, where the immediate influence of the *emporia* is a lot further away. This notion of different contemporary exchange networks has also been suggested closer to Ipswich in coastal East Suffolk. Here, Newman has tentatively identified an early territorial unit in the Lothingland hundred that was using primarily Middle Anglo-Saxon handmade pottery instead of Ipswich Ware (Newman, 2008). It is argued that this 'territorial unit' reflects an alternative power-base to Ipswich, and maybe explains why huge amounts of Ipswich Ware were exchanged further around the coast to West Norfolk instead of to the nearby East Suffolk (Newman, 2008, 17-22).

*Continental wares*

This new model - of diverse control over ceramic distribution – seems to be further illustrated by the contrasting distributions of Middle Anglo-Saxon imported ceramics in Norfolk. Initial studies used imported pottery to emphasise trade between Anglo-Saxon England and the Rhineland (Dunning, 1956, 35-38). Subsequently their distribution was interpreted as evidence for elite controlled socially embedded exchange (Hodges, 1981; Hodges, 1982), with imported ceramics at rural sites therefore indicating high-status aristocratic or ecclesiastical centres (Wickham, 2005, 809). Imported Middle Anglo-Saxon ceramics in Norfolk can be crudely divided into

three main groups: Tating Ware, Badorf Wares and North French Grey/Black Burnished Wares, which may also include sherds originating in the Low Countries (**Fig. 27**). The production, distribution and circulation of all three ceramic groups have been interpreted in different ways and their observed Norfolk distributions can therefore be usefully interpreted.

**Tating Ware**, recovered from six Norfolk sites, is a black burnished ware with characteristic tinfoil decoration attributed to the second half of the Eighth century and the first quarter of the Ninth century (Hodges, 1981, 65). Pots were traditionally thought to be manufactured exclusively in the Mayen area of the Rhineland, although more recent analysis suggests that the majority of production occurred in northern France or the Meuse valley (Stilke, Hein and Mommsen, 1996, 25-32); all potential production foci are represented in Norfolk (the sherd from North Elmham being Frankish) (Hodges, 1981, 66). Because of its scarcity and the decorative scheme applied to jugs (tinfoil Maltese crosses), the function of Tating Ware has been linked to Christianity, specifically the ritual of communion (Blinkhorn, pers comm.; Wade, 1988, 98). It has also been considered 'high status' (Brown, 2003, 23), or a 'primitive value' traded in tandem with utilitarian Mayen lava querns (Hodges, 1981, 67).

Subsequently, however, finds of Tating Wares from a range of European sites, indicate that the vessels were used at a number of types of site, (not only at high status ecclesiastical) in Northern Germany (Stiegemann and Wenhoff, 1999, 28). Tating Ware has also been recovered at elite centres with overtly secular elements, for example, St. Denis in France (Wyss, 2001, 191-200) or Paderborn (Loveluck, 2005, 242-243). In Anglo-Saxon England Tating Wares were also recovered from the temporary market site at Lake End, Dorney in England (Hiller *et al.* 2002, 57-72). These finds suggest that the function and mode of distribution of Tating Wares is rather more complicated than first imagined.

A consideration of the Norfolk assemblage as a whole appears to confirm this: North Elmham (Reynolds, 1999, 140) and the unexcavated site at West Dereham (Percival

and Trimble, 2008, 333) both have ecclesiastical associations. Brancaster has also been considered a Middle Anglo-Saxon religious site (Pestell, 2004, 57), possibly a missionary station (Hoggett, Unpublished, Forthcoming), although its coastal situation contrasts with the former sites. In contrast, finds of Tating Ware have also been made at coastal sites in West Norfolk with no obvious ecclesiastical associations (West Walton, Outwell). Most interestingly, three sherds come from the excavated site at Middle Harling, which is certainly not monastic or even 'top-ranking', going by the metalwork, in status terms (Rogerson, 1995, 87-88). However, too few fragments of Tating Ware have so far been located to reconstruct distribution patterns with any confidence. In contrast, Badorf-type Wares and North French Blackwares, two broader traditions of ceramics, have been recovered more frequently.

**Badorf-type Ware** is light coloured and, later, red-painted fabrics produced from the second half of the Eighth century, perhaps initially in the Middle Rhineland, such as the Vorgebirge region near Cologne (Hodges, 1981, 63). It was produced by a number of different kilns from an early date (Hurst, 1969, 94) and distributed across the lower Rhine and Meuse valleys, Flanders and Frisia, dominating, for example, Dorestad's ceramic assemblage by c. 800 (Wickham, 2005, 94).

A specific class of Badorf-type Wares are relief-band amphorae, which were probably intended for transportation of wine (Van Es, et al 1984). The relief band amphorae were initially thought to have been produced exclusively between the Seventh and Ninth centuries (*ibid*), but a number of excavations on the continent now provide a chronological sequence extending to the later Eleventh century (Piton, 1993; Hodges, 1981b, 27). Relief band amphorae are recovered in the south and east of Anglo-Saxon England from the Eight century onwards, perhaps reflecting a growing taste for imported Rhenish wine. Although we must be careful not to use the wares to define one specific aspect of trade (McCarthy and Brooks, 1988, 82), amphorae found at Ipswich (Wade, 1988) led Hutcheson (2006, 86) to suggest that the imported wine represented by the sherds denoted royally controlled trade and tribute.

**North French Blackwares** illustrate a broad tradition of potting, including some grey burnished wares, concentrated in northern France, but with a distribution stretching across the low countries to the Meuse valley and as far southeast as the Rhineland. These fabrics were originally identified in Merovingian cemeteries of the Sixth and Seventh centuries (Hodges, 1981, 68). The large amount of black wares in the environs of the *emporia* at Quentovic led to suggestions that this was an important production centre (Hill et al, 1992; Hill et al, 1990, 55). Imports from northern France, including Carolingian black wares of the Eighth and Ninth centuries from five different production centres, dominate in Anglo-Saxon Southampton (Brown, 1997, 95-112). The scattered production centres for Blackwares has led to the suggestion of a somewhat different mode of production and control of distribution to the Badorf-type wares (Hodges, 1981, 94). North French Blackwares are also well represented in Lincolnshire (Crowson et al, 2005), including Lincoln itself (Adams Gilmour, 1988), and in east Yorkshire around the Humber (Loveluck, 2007b, 113). This can be contrasted with Ipswich, which is dominated by ceramics originating in the Rhineland (Brown, 1997, 95-112).

Although the Norfolk assemblage of Badorf and North French Blackwares is small (42 sherds in total), their respective distributions indicate that a variety of sites were in receipt of these imported ceramics, perhaps indicating the existence of different trading networks. Blackwares are concentrated in coastal West Norfolk, with the Fen-edge sites linked with North France and the Low Countries, an east coast exchange network extending to Lincolnshire and the Humber. In contrast, a number of inland sites, including those in the zone of 'estate centres' in West Norfolk, were in receipt of Badorf Wares, perhaps reflecting the consumption of wine from the Rhineland. Finds of Badorf-type wares in Kings Lynn, Norwich and Thetford indicate exchange and redistribution from these emergent urban foci, although some of the wares may date to as late as the Twelfth century.

The contrasting patterns described above might suggest unregulated mercantile exchange in the coastal zone, and ecclesiastical/secular controlled exchange and

consumption further inland, even though the Badorf Ware may have passed through the coastal sites (following Loveluck 2010/11, 13). In this instance, contrasting status between imported ceramics in coastal and inland zones might be postulated (following Loveluck and Tys, 2006, 142). For example, Badorf Wares, exchanged under an uncertain mode of control at the later urban foci, might have been considered only a minor valuable prior to re-distribution inland. This situation is paralleled on the south coast of England, where very little imported pottery moved inland from Middle Anglo-Saxon Southampton to Winchester. Rejecting the assumption that imports were exclusively used by foreign merchants at the *wic* sites (Morton, 1992, 67-68), Brown (2003, 21) argued that this distribution pattern might indicate a change in mode of exchange and status between imported ceramics in coastal and inland zones. However, we must also remember that it is also now generally accepted that the trade in imported Middle Anglo-Saxon ceramics was not a commercial staple (Blinkhorn, 1999, 11). In short, the exchange of other commodities (bulk goods) might eventually better characterise rural settlement identities (McCormick, 2001, 9; see also Anderton (ed). 1999, Moreland 2000b, 69-104).

**Late Anglo-Saxon Pottery**

The distribution of Late Anglo-Saxon pottery seems to mirror and expand Middle Anglo-Saxon patterns. This might indicate that the Eighth century (Williamson, 2003, 180), and not the Ninth to Tenth centuries (Dyer, 2003, Lewis et al., 1997), was the crucial period for the fossilisation of settlement patterns in Norfolk, although a measure of Scandinavian influence on landscape re-organisation is suggested (Martin and Satchell, 2009). Yet, despite broad apparent continuities in pottery distribution, the Late Anglo-Saxon period in Norfolk certainly saw huge transformations in pottery *production* that requires explanation.

*Thetford-type Wares*

Thetford-type Ware, a wheel-thrown grey ware first noted in excavations of kilns at Thetford (Rogerson and Dallas, 1984), was produced between the Ninth and later Eleventh centuries (Leah, 1994, 121). The pottery has a very wide distribution, although it concentrates in East Anglia. Sherds recovered in excavations as far away as Bergen, Norway, confirm the existence of a Late Anglo-Saxon North-Sea-wide trade network involving these ceramics (Ayers, 2003, 51). A broad dating scheme of c.850 – 1075/1100 is now suggested - derived from Thetford-type wares found in association with dated artefacts at numerous excavated sites - although some recent publications tend towards a very late Ninth century start date (Lentowicz, 2007, 165). A number of sub-groups of the broad pottery type have variations within this chronological bracket, for example Grimston-Thetford Ware was produced from the Tenth century (Hurst, 1957, 42-60; Jennings, 1981 and 1983, 74-91; Rogerson and Dallas, 1984; Leah, 1994, 121; Andrews 1995).

The introduction of Thetford-type Wares in the Ninth century is concurrent with the increase in trade, and the formation of new urban foci facilitating trade and exchange following the Scandinavian settlement of eastern England (Hurst, 1976, 284). Hutcheson has suggested that the transition to the production of Thetford-type Wares might reflect a deliberate move on the part of Danish elites to move the royal powerbase from a now vulnerable Ipswich to Thetford between the 840's and 860's (Hutcheson, 2006, 92-93). Ayers furthered the notion of earlier elite controlled production, by suggesting that the earliest Thetford-type wares were produced in Ipswich, Thetford and Norwich alone (Ayers, 2003, 50-51). This model allows for the possibility that Ninth century Thetford-type Wares represent the relocation and redefining of a necessary industry away from Ipswich by an intrusive elite (Hutcheson, 2006, 92-93), although Thetford-type Wares are then also produced in Ipswich (Lentowicz, 2007, 170).

However, there are some very important caveats to the above (perhaps simplistic) model of 'controlled' production of Thetford Ware. Firstly, the excavation of Ninth century rural settlement deposits in Norfolk has indicated both sudden (e.g. North Elmham; Wade Martins, 1980 a and b) and gradual replacements (e.g. Sedgeford;

Davies et al, 2007) of Ipswich Ware with Thetford-type Wares as the main ceramic of choice (**Fig. 28.**). If these observed patterns genuinely reflect social patterns, as opposed to recovery bias or post-excavation decisions upon phasing, then it might be argued that there was no single overriding mode of distribution for Thetford-type Ware. Perhaps a high-status site such as North Elmham - closer to the centre of the political hub – was subject to more rapid transformations in access to certain commodities as opposed to a less exceptional rural site such as Sedgeford.
It is also possible to postulate that contrasting patterns of use in contemporary deposits, reflecting different modes of pottery distribution, might also reflect the existence of contrasting modes of production. For example, by the Eleventh century, Thetford-type wares were produced at a number of rural centres, including Grimston, Bircham, Langhale and Fransham (Leah, 1994, 121). Without detailed petrological analysis, it is hard to reconstruct the distribution of individual fabric groups, although Grimston-Thetford Ware seems to have a widespread West Norfolk distribution (*ibid*). That a number of intra-regional production centres can be identified as time progresses suggests that if early Thetford Ware production was centrally controlled this control was not particularly strong and did not remain the case. This diversification of production seems to have predated the decline of Thetford as identified by coin and documentary evidence (Dunmore and Carr, 1976).

The wide range of vessel forms produced by the various Thetford-type Ware kilns also indicates a ceramic tradition that can be contrasted quite strongly as time progresses with the more restrictive Ipswich Ware tradition - although interestingly Thetford Ware jars do dominate earlier assemblages (Little, 1994). The existence of different rural kilns and different vessel forms might reflect contrasting modes of production - perhaps both elite controlled and free entrepreneur - that one might expect in a more developed market-based society (McCarthy and Brooks, 1988, 60).
In conclusion, as time progresses, it is impossible to offer simple explanations for the production or distribution of Thetford-type Wares. These patterns are further emphasised in the varied production of unglazed Grimston ware, the main Eleventh to Thirteenth century fabric group for West Norfolk, a ceramic tradition that evolved out of the Thetford-type Wares (Lentowicz and Percival, 1994).

*Regional and Continental Imports*

A number of regional and continental imports are present in excavated Late Anglo-Saxon pottery assemblages in Norfolk. Diverse assemblages are particularly noticeable in urban areas, for example, Late Anglo-Saxon Ipswich, Thetford and Norwich (**Fig. 29**). Diagnostic regional imports include Lincolnshire Shelly Wares, St. Neots Wares and, less frequently, Torksey Wares, produced in various centres around Lincolnshire between the Ninth and Eleventh centuries (Symonds, 2003, 30-31). Another regional import is Stamford Ware, produced from c.850-1150 (with c.20 % glazed from the Eleventh century) (Leach, 1987). Finds of these fabrics in rural west Norfolk reinforce the notion of continued trade contact with Lincolnshire, the east coast and the rest of England during the Late Anglo-Saxon period. Typically, regional imports will represent no more than c.5% of an assemblage at late Anglo-Saxon rural sites (Rogerson, pers comm.). Quantifying differentiated consumption of regionally imported ceramic types is therefore difficult.

However, interesting differentiations *are* observable in the urban foci of Thetford and Norwich. In Norwich there is some indication that certain regional imports might have served different functions. At the Greyfriars site, Norwich, St. Neots pottery represented utilitarian forms such as cooking pots and bowls, while Stamford Wares were generally finer table wares such as spouted pitchers, indicative of higher-status consumption (Lentowicz, 2007, 170). This pattern, although so far unrecognised, might also apply to rural sites, although why this is the case is uncertain; perhaps a particular commodity was transported in Stamford Ware. Whatever the case, Thetford seems to be closer to the hub of St. Neot's-type Ware distribution, with the fabric representing up to 30% of some assemblages, for example, at Redcastle Furze (Little, 1995), whereas at Norwich it is less well represented.

Throughout the Late Anglo-Saxon period, a wide variety of continental pottery fabrics, such as Pingsdorf type Wares (Tenth to Twelfth centuries), Rouen Wares and Andenne Wares (starting in the Eleventh century) are all recovered, indicating

continued trade contact with Continental Europe, particularly the Meuse valley and the Rhineland (Demolon and Verhaeghe, 1993, 385-407). Increasingly, however, continental imports become the preserve of the mercantile urban hubs and are of less use for exploring identity, affiliation and differentiated ceramic use in a rural context.

## Coinage

Coinage is a uniquely important artefact for understanding trade and exchange patterns and, despite variations in the length of time in which a coin can be in circulation, for dating other deposits at settlements (Barker, 1993, 2005-6). From the Tenth century onwards many coins can be attributed to specific named mints and, even prior to this, concentrated regional distributions of coins are suggestive of minting specific to regions. This allows archaeologists to reconstruct potential trade/exchange patterns from a point of origin outwards (e.g. Lebecq, 1997, 74, Fig.30 and 76-77).

More recently, the artwork found on Anglo-Saxon coinage has also been used to distinguish contrasting aspects of social identities and affiliations, including the legitimisation of secular power and the influence of Christianity (Gannon, 2003). Importantly, there were enormous variations, pre-capitalism, in what money symbolised. Such variations must indicate contrasting uses of coinage and therefore contrasting notions of production, consumption, circulation and exchange (Bloch and Parry, 1989, 1). Regional and sub-regional distributions of coinage might therefore provide us with an opportunity to observe contrasting modes of coin use intrinsically linked to pre-capitalist social identities.

As mentioned in Chapter 2, Naylor has recently demonstrated the importance of interpreting early medieval coin loss at individual sites against a background of regional coin loss (Naylor, 2007 after Reece, 1987, 71-80). If we do this for Anglo-Saxon England (Naylor, 2007, 41-61), we might identify at least four periods where coin loss indicates changing or different but co-existent (Verhulst, 2002, 41-61) modes of coin circulation. The regional pattern of coin loss for Norfolk indicates

broadly the same overall patterns of coin loss to Anglo-Saxon England as a whole (see Blackburn 2003, 32, Fig. 3.6), although there is some deviation from these trends which might reflect some distinct regional and sub-regional identities (**Fig. 30**).

**Coinage Pre-680**

Coinage prior to c.680 AD is rare in Anglo-Saxon England and is restricted mostly to imported gold coins minted in continental Europe, notably the gold shillings (or *thrymsas/tremisses*) of Merovingian Frankia. These coins are traditionally seen as having been produced under strict royal authority as symbolic tokens for the purposes of fines, compensation payments and taxation (Williams, 2008, 16).

However, recent commentators, noting the existence of Sixth century mints at monasteries in towns such as Maastricht, have raised questions over the strictness of controlled production of these early coins (Theuws, 2004, 121-138). Yet, the few Anglo-Saxon gold coins of the earlier Seventh century based on these Frankish *tremisses* do seem to have been produced under royal or emergent ecclesiastical authority in regions such as Kent (Williams, 2008, 20). These observations sit most comfortably with the substantivist interpretations of scholars such as Grierson (1963) and Hodges (1982) who, following Polyani (1957), argued for a highly controlled non-monetary early medieval economy. In addition, coins of this period were also deposited in pagan burials, as noted in Yorkshire (Naylor, 2004, 19) and Kent (Richardson, 2005, 26). We therefore cannot automatically assume that coin finds indicate economic activity.

Of the 64 coins dated to between 450 and 680 in Norfolk, 50% of the coins (32) are Merovingian *tremisses*, whilst the others are either products of unknown English mints, or Kentish in origin (5 coins, 8% ). There are no overly suggestive distribution patterns for this early coinage, although coin loss along the Fen-edge (including near Kings Lynn and West Winch, and the case-study site of Bawsey) shows that this area

did have coin-using individuals engaged in transaction during this time, whatever practice of exchange that might represent. Findspots of early gold coins at Coddenham, Suffolk, have been used to suggest that rural exchange and perhaps even long-distance trade with Frankia might have predated the rise of the *emporia* (Newman, 2003, 92-110; Hamerow, 2002, 187). At Bawsey, the presence of early gold coins have similarly been regarded as denoting early economic significance (Blackburn, 2003, 32; see Chapter 10).

**Coinage c. 680-760**

The debasement of the early gold coinage starts the emergence of a more widespread use of silver coins (*sceattas*) throughout the North Sea littoral from the 680's. Particularly between 680 and 740 there is a *flourit* of coin-use in Norfolk, with 680 coins recovered (**Fig. 30**). Coin use is then sustained but reduced again during the period 740-760 (160 coins).

The large amount of coinage, combined with a variety of die-stamps indicating different mints led formalists, (e.g. Metcalf, 1965; Op Den Velde, 2008), to the conclusion that a fully fledged monetary economy existed in Anglo-Saxon England at this time. In contrast, as noted above, substantivists regard coinage as a socially embedded tool for high level exchange until the Ninth century (Hodges and Whitehouse, 1989). This was the view taken by Hutcheson for West Norfolk; he suggested that the many finds of sceatta coins relate to the payment of taxation (Hutcheson, 2006, 79-84). In contrast, a synthesis of the Norfolk evidence has suggested that the use of *sceattas* is more widespread than this (Williamson, 1993, 81). A more circumspect interpretation might suggest that the explosion in coin loss after c.680 indicates at least a partial transformation of coin use from being exclusively a tool for socially embedded gift exchange to a token used during alienable exchange; in monetary transaction.

It is now generally accepted that during the period c.680 - 760, transactions occurred at a diverse range of rural sites in addition to the *emporia*, including perhaps a range of secular or ecclesiastical estate centres hidden behind the 'productive' site tithe (Williams, 2008, 29). Further theme to consider for Norfolk and West Norfolk is whether distinct modes of trade/exchange, as reflected in contrasting distributions of certain coin types, might provide further evidence for contrasting social identities at particular sites.

Between 680 and 740, imported of continental coins form 30-40 % of the total Norfolk coin assemblage, reducing to c.15 % between 740 and 760. Two of the most common continental coins are the Series D and Series E types. Despite the difficulty in provenancing these coins, Series E (c.700-765) have traditionally been attributed to Dorestad (Wood, 1994, Grierson and Blackburn, 1986, 167-8). Series D are believed to originate in Frisia, perhaps at Domburg although Metcalf has questioned this attribution (Metcalf, 2001, 50). On the basis of regional concentrations of loss, Op Den Velde suggests that some Series D coins were perhaps minted in the river zone near Esharen. Certainly, the early Type 2c Series D sceatta (700-715) are undoubtedly from the Netherlands, with imitations perhaps minted in England (Op Den Velde, 2008, 89).

Series E type *sceattas* are particularly abundant in West Norfolk (**Fig. 31**), perhaps reflecting a strong Frisian trade presence, also indicated by the abundance of Blackware from coastal sites in the region. The absence of regal or ecclesiastical motifs on the Series E coins has been taken to indicate a specific '...commercial issuing authority anxious to retain a recognised and accepted type...' (Abramson, 2006, 11). It is interesting to imagine that these coins might in some circumstances reflect a specific mode of attempted controlled exchange.

Other continental *sceattas* found in Norfolk at this time, although much less frequently, are Series X. These are now regarded as having been minted under strict control in the *emporia* of Ribe in southern Jutland, Denmark (Feveille, 2008, 61-68), although a number of earlier commentators postulated an additional Frisian source

(Mallmer, 2002, 117-132). The Series X *sceattas* demonstrate that Ribe was at the eastern end of an extensive network of North Sea trading places producing and using similar coinage (Williams, 2008, 27). The traditional chronology for Series X is c.710-740 (Abramson, 2006, 15). However, on the basis of seriation from deeply stratified sites, Feville has recently argued that Series X *sceattas* were circulating in Ribe for the entire Eighth century (Feveile, 2008, 61-66). This might indicate that Pippin the Short's coin reforms of the 750's, which introduced Carolingian pennies with named monarchs on them, were not as politically and economically all-encompassing as once thought (see below), allowing for the possibility that currencies indicative of contrasting authorities were in twin circulation (*ibid*).

In addition to continental issues there is a great deal of coinage, dated to c.710-760 and known as Secondary series *sceattas*, minted in Anglo-Saxon England. No named mints are known, but concentrations of coins in particular regions have led to the suggestion that, for example, Series H (c.720-740) were minted in *Hamwic*/Southampton (Metcalf, 2001, 51) and Series L (c.730-765) *Lundenwic*/London. In addition, concentrated distributions of Series R and Series Q *sceattas* in East Anglia seem to suggest that these are East Anglian issues (Abramson, 2006, 22-25). The contrasting contemporary distributions of the Series R and Series Q coins has led to an interesting debate concerning the social context of their minting and the possible existence of contrasting political affiliations.

Series R *sceattas* are reasonably evenly distributed throughout East Anglia although there is a notable West Norfolk concentration (**Fig. 32**). As the overall distribution corresponds strongly with the East Anglian kingdom these coins have traditionally been regarded as minted at the *emporia* at Ipswich (Newman, 1999). Although Metcalf (2000) remains more cautious over mint attribution, he accepts that it is '...difficult to envisage [the Series R coinage] as anything other than a royal coinage' (Metcalf, 2000, 7). Following this argument, Metcalf explains the concentration of Series R *sceattas* in West Norfolk as a product of ongoing monetary transfers between the Ipswich region and West Norfolk, '...the two dominant areas of monetary circulation in East Anglia...' (ibid, 10).

Series Q *sceattas* (see Newman 2008 for distribution) also concentrate in West Norfolk and in particular northern west Norfolk (Metcalf, 2000, 5). Newman suggests that the monastic site at Ely, Cambridgeshire, beyond the western extent of Norfolk, was the mint site for these coins (Newman, 1999). This fits well with the work of Gannon (2003) who has also regarded coinage produced under monastic control as an important aspect of the Middle Anglo-Saxon coin economy. However, Metcalf postulates a more northerly mint location, perhaps Castle Rising or even Burnham (Metcalf, 2000, 5).

Two important points emerge from the distributions of Series Q and Series R *sceattas*. Firstly, if Newman is correct, then we potentially have the concurrent circulation of coinage minted under ecclesiastical (Series Q) and secular (Series R) authorities. This might mean that coin finds at rural settlements reflect the interaction of local communities with quite different forms of economic control. Secondly, the discrete West Norfolk distribution of Series Q *sceattas* has led Metcalf (2000), who favours secular minting, to suggest that its distribution reflects an independent or semi-independent political entity in which Series Q circulated with 'political backing' (Metcalf, 2000, 5). The lesser known Series BZ *sceattas* (8 examples) also have a discrete West Norfolk distribution, which might mean they were minted under a further West Norfolk authority (ibid.).

The potential interaction of contrasting Middle Anglo-Saxon elites, as evidenced by coin use at individual rural sites, will be an important element of further interpretation in Chapters 5-11, as is the speculation that certain continental coins (e.g. Series E *sceattas*) might represent a further, perhaps mercantile, system of exchange.

**Coinage c.760-870**

**Fig. 33**

Despite an extended period of loss for the East Anglian Series R *sceattas*, fundamental changes occurred in coin use by 760, characterised by reduced quantities of coinage in circulation but also by changes in the type and source of coinage, revealing fundamental changes in exchange networks. Although we should not rule out the possibility of commercial transactions (Spufford, 1988, 48), particularly by the later Eighth century, it might more easily be argued that this period saw a return to socially embedded exchange (Naylor, 2007). This might also be reflected by increased finds of ingots, weights and balances indicative of coin-free transaction.

Perhaps the most evident transformations are the replacement of the anonymous *sceatta* coins with larger 'broad flan' pennies, featuring named rulers, by c.750-760. This coin reform was initiated by Pepin the Short, the first Carolingian monarch, in 751, who attempted to re-establish centralised royal authority via this form of coinage (Williams, 2008, 32). The coinage of Northumbria, Mercia, Kent and East Anglia seems to have quickly followed suit. In East Anglia, coins of independent monarchs, such as Beonna (c.749-60), were minted before the region was conquered and the coinage of Offa of Mercia, in competitive emulation of Charlemagne, became dominant (Chick, 2005, 133-138; Blackburn, 2007). Twenty-four coins dated to between c.760 and 790 have been recovered from Norfolk, almost all of which are either East Anglian or Mercian issues - the exceptions being coins of Pepin the Short (see Chapter 9) and Aethelred I of Northumbria.

Following this insular period of coin loss, coinage from a variety of different sources is found in Norfolk from c.790. Of these 170 coins, 60 are from Mercia, whilst 30 are East Anglian, with 14 Carolingian, 42 Northumbrian, 13 Kentish and three from Wessex. These diverse origins reveal a context of political transformation: perhaps those involved in trade and exchange-related activities had to make choices about which markets to interact with. After Offa's death in 796, otherwise anonymous independent kings of East Anglian, such as Eadwald (796-8), issued coinage before the Mercian overlordship was restored under Coenwulf. Following Coenwulf's death

and the end of Mercian overlordship, East Anglian coinage is rare, but a coin of Athelstan I (825-45) depicting a ship derived from Carolingian issues from Dorestad and Quentovic has been found (Williams, 2008, 39). This seems to reflect a desire to link with Carolingian Frankish trade networks or possibly even emerging Frankish political influence, something perhaps pre-echoed in metalwork in the Burn Valley (see below). Prior to the creation of the Danelaw in 878, both Mercian and East Anglian coinage were in circulation in Norfolk, for example coins of Burgred of Mercia (852-874), indicating a complex political situation. This variety in coinage might well reflect accompanying transformations at rural sites.

The coinage of Northumbria (known as the *styca* coinage), was the only kingdom-wide coinage issued both during and after the Mercian overlordship. The abundance of *styca* coinage found away from towns provides excellent evidence for rural trade and quantity suggests that they were small denomination, perhaps indicating a monetary economy in Ninth century Northumbria (Williams, 2008, 49). Naylor has interpreted this phase of coin use in Yorkshire as one characterised by greater royal control (Naylor, 2007, 59). However, rare gold coinage minted by Wigmund at York based on Louis the Pious' coins (814-40), as well as more regular York and Canterbury issues, reminds us not to discount ecclesiastical authority (Naylor, 2007, 59). Furthermore, mis-spelt inscriptions on some *styca* coinage suggest that firm royal control over production was not always maintained (Williams, 2008, 50). Intriguingly, although 39 *styca* have been recovered from Norfolk, none has been identified at any of the west Norfolk 'productive' sites. In contrast, 3 *styca* coins have been recovered from a single field in Heacham (NHER 16297), which faces the Wash and Northumbria on the west Norfolk coast. This might suggest that sites were making deliberate choices in exchange contacts, providing slight but intriguing evidence for allegiance to contrasting political structures and therefore contrasting identities.

As time progressed, coinage would have increased in circulation in a context of Scandinavian-controlled seaways which might have provided constraints on choice of exchange mechanisms. The Carolingian gold coinage that arrives in Anglo-Saxon

England from the reigns of Louis the Pious (814-840) and Charles the Bald (840-877) is traditionally linked with payment of tribute from the Frankish monarchs to Viking warbands (Coupland, 1999). Most recently, however, Storey (2003, 254-255) has suggested that, instead of the first 'Viking' coinage, these Carolingian gold coins might actually represent a final continuance of the older Frankish trade networks, as is perhaps evidenced by a Pepin the Short coin from Sedgeford (See Chapter 9, p.353-354). Despite not being particularly abundant (13 coins, plus a single earlier coin of Charlemagne, 793-814), this coinage is well distributed around Norfolk, including some of the 'productive' sites, and does not show any noticeable enclaves or concentrations as might be expected if it represented intrusive Scandinavian incursions.

**Coinage, 880-1050**

**Fig. 34**

It is traditionally argued that 'Viking' activity altered the economic landscape of North Sea Europe via either raiding in the 840's (Hodges, 2008), or an undermining of mercantile confidence as early as the 830's (Hinton, 2010, 92-95). Certainly, the influence of Scandinavia is observable on the coinage of East Anglia by the 860's. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle records that in 869 'a great heathen horde' arrived in East Anglia and killed the East Anglian King Edmund (Swanton, 2000, 71). Following the short-lived issues of Aethlred and Oswald, East Anglian minted coinage of Anglo-Saxon rulers comes to an end.

After the creation of the Danelaw, fundamental changes certainly occurred in both coin use and exchange networks. Coin loss in Norfolk, although widely distributed, is largely restricted to Viking Danelaw-minted issues. Of 77 coins dated 878-913 in Norfolk, all are Danelaw issues with the exception of 11 Anglo-Saxon issues (4 of Alfred the Great, 7 of Edward the Elder) and 13 Arabic coins. This time is traditionally characterised by a 'status silver economy enjoyed by warrior leaders' (Metcalf, 2007,

1-12) with little monetary exchange, hence the presence of clipped coins and ingots which represent re-use of scarce coinage, the replacement of money with tokens of standardised weight (Blackburn, 2001, 135), and a mistrust of Anglo-Saxon coinage (Pestell, 2005, 36). This 'silver economy' was traditionally seen to occur in a context of Scandinavian-controlled sea routes, which also accounts for the arrival of Arabic coinage in many regions of Europe (Skre 2007, 48-49). The abundance of coin hordes in East Anglia dated to c.895 perhaps also reflects societal unease, as opposed to economic activity (Naylor, 2004, 18-19).

It has more recently been argued that we might equally interpret this period as a dual monetary/gift-exchange economy. For example, Guthrum, the first Danelaw ruler, was actively attempting to maintain a seamless East Anglian monetary dynasty following the Viking conquest, as the use of the same moneyers as Aethlred/Oswald, and coins with his baptised name of Aethelstan might suggest (Blackburn, 2001, 125-142). In one instance, Guthrum's moneyers used Caroligian dies from Quentovic, perhaps attempting to reinforce old connexions (Blackburn, 2001, 125-142). It has also been argued that Guthrum's imitations of Alfred the Great coins attempt to copy a standard weight for traditional Anglo-Saxon coins (*ibid*). This all suggests that it was perhaps in the interest of the Scandinavian ruler to promote and legitimise monetary trade and not restrain it.

As time progresses, Christian iconography (and therefore patronage) becomes increasingly important to Scandinavian rulers, for example, the production of St. Edmund memorial coinage (anonymous rulers) in East Anglia during the 890's. Hadley has suggested that Christian imagery and standard weight would have been important to both 'local lords' and the Royal houses of Wessex and Frankia, convincing them that the Danes, and therefore their coinage, belonged to a civilised community of Christian states (Hadley, 2006, 46-7). In York, the coin evidence suggests an interaction between the ecclesiastical elite and the Scandinavian rulers. Rollason (1999), for example, has highlighted potential ecclesiastically issued coins featuring pagan imagery (including the raven and Thor's hammer). The imagery on

this coinage suggests that it may have been intended for widespread use by the population of York (Blackburn, 2004).

Perhaps then, instead of searching for Tenth century discontinuities, we should instead use the evidence of coinage to look at the role of Scandinavian elites in the stimulus of trade and exchange. Indeed, numismatic analysis in continental Europe has suggested that some trading places, such as Quentovic, where coin production is traditionally seen to decline by the Ninth century, actually re-emerged from 864 (Charles the Bald), continuing to produce coinage throughout the Tenth century with no suggestion that Viking occupation resulted in economic hiatus (Coupland, 2002). This situation might well be the case in numerous rural hinterlands. For example, following the West Saxon re-conquest of the Danelaw in 918, we see a steady rise in coin loss throughout the later Anglo-Saxon period (c.930 to 1050) in Norfolk (a total of 219 coins). Although coin loss is never as abundant as in the period from 680-760, the period of the Danelaw certainly introduced a further period of economic prosperity.

Coinage dated to 930-1050 is almost completely of Anglo-Saxon issue, reflecting the rise of the nation state. A final major coin reform by Edgar (957/9-975) introduces standardised coins with the image of the king and a named mint on them, which set the way for a standardised coin-type throughout the country (Stewart, 1990). East Anglian mints are well represented, perhaps reflecting the economic prosperity of the region.

## Metalwork

Metalwork finds, especially in a rural county such as Norfolk where metal-detecting is common, are now so abundant (for example, between April 2008 and March 2009, 231 Early Anglo-Saxon, 96 Middle Anglo-Saxon and 151 Late Anglo-Saxon non-ferrous findspots were recorded, Darch, pers comm.) that this discussion focuses on some key categories of artefacts where regional and sub-regional distributions might

be particularly useful for highlighting contrasting aspects of social affiliations and identities.

As with pottery distributions, the interpretation of metalwork distributions is not without complications. Particularly during the period pre-700, we are dealing with surface reflections of cemetery assemblages and not settlements. Additionally, functional objects and iron finds are underrepresented as they are often not retained during metal detection (Gregory and Rogerson, 1984). Furthermore, as most non-ferrous metalwork includes personal dress-related items, it is frequently uncertain whether these findspots reflect loss during economic transactions or use-related loss at settlements.

**Ethnic/Cultural affiliation and Early Anglo-Saxon Metalwork**

Chester-Kadwell (2009, 74) has suggested that brooch-rich surface-find assemblages might indicate cemeteries, whilst brooch-weak assemblages might indicate settlements (ibid. 74-5). If surface finds of Early Anglo-Saxon metalwork might indeed be equated to either settlement or cemetery, we might then ask exactly *what* sort of information concerning social identities and affiliations these objects might be providing. Of importance here are a set of debates concerning what the adoption of motifs preserved as artwork on metalwork represent.

Early archaeological studies frequently mapped the distribution of specific art styles on Early Anglo-Saxon metalwork and equated this with direct movement of Germanic peoples to Eastern England (Myers, 1969, 1; Bohme, 1986). For example, in East Anglia the appearance of new artefact types, particularly brooch styles, were used to argue for mass migration of peoples from Saxony and southern Denmark (Williamson, 1993, 52) and Norway (Hines, 1984), or to identify 'Anglian' or 'Saxon' burial costumes (Parfitt and Brugmann, 1997). This assumes that art styles equate directly to a shared ethnic or cultural 'folk' identity expressed via traditional dress (*tracht*). However, as Childe (1956) realised at an early stage, the presence of the

same type of artefacts in different regions, for example, similar grave goods in different Anglo-Saxon kingdoms during the Seventh/Eighth century, renders the search for archaeologically defined 'cultures' impossible (Geake, 1997; 1999, 203). It is now accepted that homogeneity of grave assemblage might reflect competitive emulation as much as ethnic/culture identity (Carver, 1989, 141-158). Early Anglo-Saxon artwork on metalwork is now regarded as having multiple meanings signifying numerous aspects of identities, such as exchange connections or gender representation (Stoodley, 1999, 136), for example, the burial of a juvenile with heavily worn items of jewellery, probably heirlooms, which were far too big for her at Holywell Row, Suffolk (Lethbridge, 1956, Lucy, 2000a, 173).

As Chapter 2 argued, it is accepted that identities, as expressed and shaped through material culture, are constantly transforming and multi-faceted concepts (Gosden, 1994, 1999, Ingold, 1995). So, rather than searching for finite conclusions to questions of potential ethnic/cultural affiliation expressed via artwork on portable metalwork, it is by debating the various potential meanings invested in material that we get closer to the nuanced identities of the people that populated Early Anglo-Saxon settlements. For example, Dickinson has demonstrated that, although Anglo-Saxon shield ornamentation sought iconographic analogies with Scandinavian metalwork depicting pagan deities, it actually also helped to construct a specifically Anglo-Saxon warrior identity (Dickinson, 2005, 110). Whilst Richards has argued that Scandinavian and Germanic symbols on artwork within Sixth-Seventh century 'warrior' burials may have helped to reconstruct a shared 'invasion myth' amongst the contemporary population more than it reflects an increase in warfare (Richards, 1992, 147)

Furthermore, archaeologists need to be aware of the entire range of continental influences on metal artefact categories from 'sites' before addressing questions of influences upon social identities. For example, the analyses of the grave assemblage from Mound 1 at Sutton Hoo, Suffolk, suggest a number of different influences within the artwork of the same grave assemblage; from Frankish to southern Scandinavian pieces (Carver, 1992). These artefacts appear to have had significant

meaning on a number of different levels, legitimising power through allegiance/association, whilst at the same time helping to construct entirely new Anglo-Saxon identities (Carver 1998, 2003).

So, when we observe an apparent cluster of 'Frankish' metalwork in West Norfolk focussed around the valley of the River Burn and consisting predominantly of radiate headed brooches, we must ask of this distribution a number of questions (**Fig. 35**). For example, as well as evidencing either direct or indirect exchange contacts with Frankia, most likely via the south east of England (Ashley, Penn, and Rogerson, 1990), might these apparently imported items also represent an attempt to emulate or aspire to an idea of Frankish authority, a strong influence in southern England during the Sixth/Seventh century (Hedeager, 1992, 292)?

**Personal dress accessories and the problem of Middle Anglo-Saxon identities: Pins**

Although it is difficult to match Early Anglo-Saxon metalwork to settlement evidence, we can nevertheless take a number of interpretative routes to address questions of identity and affiliation. In contrast, following the Anglo-Saxon conversion to Christianity during the Seventh century, although many surface find sites feature a multitude of artefact types (Hinton, 1996), it becomes a lot harder to match artefact types and artwork styles on metalwork to specific social identities. In some ways, a recent attempt at matching a group of Trewhiddle-style prestige silver strap ends from a hoard at Poppleton, E. Yorks., to a production centre in the kingdom of Northumbria and, by extrapolation, a distinct regional social selection, is the exception that proves a rule (Thomas, 2006).

One barrier to further interpretation is that objects with art styles and forms that may genuinely indicate imported metalwork are not abundant in Norfolk (**Fig. 36**). Accordingly, it is difficult to discuss the way in which Anglo-Saxon and 'foreign' identities might have interacted, although there is an interesting cluster of Eighth - Ninth century Irish metalwork in West Norfolk (Rogerson and Ashley, 2008, 434) that might reflect early Scandinavian activity (Hadley, 2001, 15, Leahy and Paterson,

2001, 190). The general paucity of genuinely imported Middle Anglo-Saxon material (both regional and continental) might be a reflection of the fact that many rural metalwork assemblages seem to be composed of standardised everyday items of dress (pins, strap ends, hooked tags, mounts etc) that did not always come from the upper echelons of society, and were perhaps manufactured at insular workshops (Leahy, 2000, 72).

Nevertheless, in an important study, Leahy (2000) demonstrated that contrasting patterns of artefact loss might represent a difference in function and contrasting social identities at 'productive' sites in the East Riding of Yorkshire. For example, the proportion of dress pins at Thwing, an enclosed site of the Eighth-Tenth centuries, was much lower than at sites at Newbald and Whitby (Leahy, 2000, 76). It was suggested that this might reflect different modes of attire at the sites, with the finds from Newbald indicating a site of lower-status than, for example, the high status site at Flixborough (ibid. 77). Unfortunately, although Leahy's interim conclusions are promising, many of the artefact types and styles considered in his study last throughout the later Seventh to Tenth centuries. As a result, observing changes in artefact type overtime that might then be equated to transformations in identity or affiliations becomes difficult.

However, using artefacts from Cottam, Haldenby and Richards (2009) suggested that facetted pins were a Middle Anglo-Saxon form that went out of fashion in the Tenth century, while disc-headed pins appeared to be a later Anglo-Scandinavian type. Globular and biconical pins appeared to be utilised consistently during both Anglian and Anglo-Scandinavian phases at Cottam B, perhaps suggesting that these types of pins were in fashion for a longer period of time than the earlier facetted and later disc-headed types. Despite possible caveats - such as early disc headed pins from Eighth to Ninth century contexts at Brandon, Suffolk (Webster and Backhouse, 1991) - it is interesting to speculate, on chronological grounds, that an artefact type might have been used to affiliate to, or associate with, Scandinavian or Anglo-Scandinavian identities.

Following this, a consideration of the pin assemblages from Sedgeford and Wormegay (**Fig. 37**; see Chapters 5 and 9) suggests that pin types were being differentially selected by the two communities. Sedgeford is dominated by the Middle Anglo-Saxon facetted types, whilst Wormegay is dominated by the longer-lived globular types. It might therefore be postulated that certain pin forms were specifically associated with the construction of as yet unknown, but materially distinct, identities (Davies and Payne, forthcoming). Interestingly, the potentially later disc-headed pin types that in Yorkshire might reflect Anglo-Scandinavian identities are absent from most Norfolk sites, perhaps reflecting a deliberate variation between dress codes of the two regions (Rogerson, pers comm.).

**Status in the Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon landscape: Styli**

In addition to the possibility that certain artefact types might reflect social affiliation, other Middle Anglo-Saxon artefacts are more indicative of status. Styli, for example, are a class of artefact that might indicate high status but whether they can also be used to identify specific social identities is less certain. Scholars generally agree that styli provide evidence of some form of literacy; something indicative of a degree of status at this time (Pestell, 2004, 45). However, whether styli finds also provide direct evidence for the presence of religious communities is disputed. Traditional interpretations argue that the discovery of styli at undocumented sites, such as 'productive' sites, indicate a religious component. For example, Blair, has stated that '...styli are signatures of culture which great minsters such as Whitby and Barking shared with ['productive' sites] but not with coastal *emporia*, nor with 'ordinary' sites producing pins, strap-ends and coins...' (Blair, 2005, 210).

In contrast, Pestell (2004, 40-48), argues that styli are found at sites with 'no suggestion of a former religious centre nearby, including a stylus in a Seventh century burial at the Buttermarket, Ipswich - considered by Blair as 'abnormal' (Blair, 2005, 210, note.116) - which might be a secular burial (ibid. 41). Nevertheless, as noted above, Pestell *does* argue that the materials used in the manufacture of styli, as well as their decoration, indicates that they were high-status or prestige objects

associated with the 'ownership of literacy' in less-literate communities (Pestell, 2004, 45). Pestell also suggests that styli, similar in form to 'styliform' pins, might have been worn as dress items with symbolic associations, including the power of literacy (i.e. the control of strategies of information exchange), education and erudition (Pestell, 2004, 47).

So, although stylus finds cannot necessarily help to distinguish between secular or ecclesiastical communities, as ' ...a medium for expressing status and wealth (ibid.)' they do perhaps provide evidence of quite subtle expressions of power. In this respect, it is interesting that stylus loss in West Norfolk is restricted to the 'estate centre' zone of the western escarpment (**Fig. 19**).

**Late Anglo-Saxon identities: Re-assessing the impact of the Vikings**

Following the 'long Eighth century' (Moreland, 2000b, 69), where an abundance of artefacts does not necessarily improve our ability to interpret material expressions of identity or affiliation, we are again overwhelmed with a wealth of informative metalwork, this time featuring Scandinavian influence. Yet, as it is now considered impossible and undesirable to identify the location of specific groups of people through the distribution of artefact types (Jones, 1997, 1-5); the artefactual evidence is better used to narrate the construction of new regional identities in the Tenth centuries through the mixing of indigenous and Scandinavian motifs (Richards, 2000, 27-40). Indeed, whilst certain items (such as concave Borre style brooches) might well have been directly imported from Scandinavia, much more were apparently manufactured in England, combining English and Scandinavian styles and forms (Hadley, 2006, 120). As a result, there are few artefacts we might call 'Scandinavian' as opposed to 'Anglo-Scandinavian' (Thomas, 2000, 242). The complex process of stylistic adoption of artwork perhaps supports the notion that, at some level there was perhaps no clear division between 'Scandinavian' and 'English' identities in the Danelaw (Hadley, 2001, 26).

In Norfolk, Scandinavian influenced metalwork finds are widely scattered throughout the rural landscape (Margeson, 1996, 48, Fig.3), including those artefacts traditionally associated with Scandinavian activity, such as trefoil brooches, oval brooches (**Fig. 38**) and perhaps ingots (Pestell, 2005, 36; **Fig. 39**). Two other categories of Scandinavinan/Anglo-Scandinavian metalwork, Borre-style objects (generally Ninth century; **Fig. 40**) and Ringerike-style objects (Tenth to Eleventh centuries) are also widely dispersed in the landscape (**Fig. 41**). Thomas (2000) is happy that this is a real pattern that goes beyond uneven recovery of objects. In the case of the most widely distributed art-type, the Ringerike style, some finds might actually represent a second-wave of real Scandinavians responsible for new Viking raids from the end of the Tenth century (Margeson, 1997, 33), when the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* records that Norwich was sacked by King Sweyn of Denmark in 1004 (Whitelock, 1961, 87; Ayers, 2003, 37). In this respect, it is interesting that Ringerike style objects are sometimes lost in hitherto artefact-free marginal or wooded areas, such as northeast Norfolk and the central clay plateau, implying a degree of settlement expansion during the Eleventh century.

The dispersed distribution of Borre and Ringerike style metalwork in Norfolk (Margeson, 1997, 8, Fig.4) has been considered similar to the distribution of finds in Denmark itself (Leahy and Paterson, 2001, 189 after Nielsen and Petersen, 1993, 223-7). This is in marked contrast with the distribution of artefacts in nearby Lincolnshire which, in the Ninth century at least, clusters around the distribution of Danish place-names quite strongly (Leahy and Paterson, 2001, 189). As activity at the Lincolnshire 'productive' sites does not seem to survive the initial Viking conquests, Leahy suggested that Scandinavian-inspired metalwork and place-name evidence, especially in the Wolds and Kesteven, might be showing a fragmentation of estates by Danish settlers (Leay and Paterson, 2001, 189). These settlers might equate to the many *sokeman* (a freeman able to dispose of their property) listed in the Domesday Book for Lincolnshire (also noted by Ekwall, 1937-45, 26). The contrasting distribution patterns of place-names and metalwork in Norfolk, combined with potential continuities at 'productive' site (see Chapters 5-11), might instead be reflecting continued activity at established foci. However, as Norfolk *also* has a large

number of freemen/sokemen mentioned in Domesday Book ,1086 (Williamson and Skipper, 2005, 38-9) this may mean that Tenth century tenurial changes occurred *at* established activity foci without the need for a geographical displacement of occupation.

A final interesting aspect of Scandinavian inspired artefacts found in rural Norfolk is the many finds that did not belong exclusively to people from the highest levels of society (Margeson, 1996, 48). Indeed, Margeson suggested that many artefacts might represent a standard 'farming' population by the Tenth century, although whether this can be equated to a Danish-speaking population is less certain (Margeson, 1996, 55, Fellows-Jensen, 1978, 370). Interestingly, women's dress is also well represented (Leahy and Peterson, 2001, 189). The poor quality of some of rural Norfolk's Scandinavian inspired metalwork clearly indicates that occupation at rural centres of the Tenth century need not always be seen as reflective of an elite presence.

**A question of Status: Late Anglo-Saxon Horse Equipment and Furniture.**

Given the above conclusion, we might need to consider that activity at many Late Anglo-Saxon rural settlements in Norfolk might not reflect aristocratic elite identities. However, within this debate, an important category of Late Anglo Saxon finds are items of horse furniture, including bridle bits and stirrup-strap mounts (Williams, 1997), which Margeson considered to represent a 'military elite' (Margeson, 1996, 55).

Stirrup mounts are a predominantly Late Anglo-Saxon category of ornamental metalwork and their increasing loss in rural areas indicates the emergence of horse riding with decorative equipment. The emergence of decorative display in relation to the pursuit of horse riding might well be seen to indicate conscious/subconscious displays of elite identity in relation to a number of different activities by the Eleventh century (Ashley, 2002, 27). Most obviously, the ability to move around the landscape on horseback is increasingly linked to the aristocratic pastime of hunting (Loveluck,

2009, 151-2). Finds of horse furniture might therefore be considered a material expression of an increasingly formalized Late Anglo-Saxon aristocratic or thegnly secular status (Senecal, 2001, 251-66).

Many stirrup mounts feature elements of abstracted Scandinavian art styles, notably Ringerike or Urnes styles, combined with elements of indigenous origin (Williams, 1997, 8). At Bawsey, for example, a stirrup mount features a scene possibly from the Norse saga of Gunnar (Williams, 1997, 12), in combination with an object style that may indicate an insular workshop with a Winchester origin (ibid.; Biddle 1966, 329-32). This might indicate the emulation of certain aspects of Scandinavian identity through insular art, as noted by Margeson (1993, 323-327).

The evidence of horse furniture in Norfolk perhaps indicates emerging aspects of both elite display, and the cultural affinities/emulations of these elites. In this respect, it is of great interest that horse furniture, as opposed to styli, is lost in both the fen-edge and western escarpment zones of West Norfolk (**Fig. 25**.). This might indicate that certain status related activities represented by horse furniture were not subject to the same loss patterns as styli, perhaps indicating activity foci of contrasting function. However, within this observation it is then very important to consider the overall context of the finds. Firstly, surface finds of horse furniture might represent loss during movement through the landscape instead of a buried settlement focus. Secondly, the presence of Scandinavian inspired metalwork of lower status at the same activity foci as Scandinavian inspired horse furniture might indicate that a number a tiers of society can be represented at a single complex activity focus (see Chapter 10).

## Interpreting West Norfolk Distributions: conclusions on extensive analyses

To conclude the discussion of extensive distributions, the present datasets for early medieval pottery, coinage, and metalwork suggest that a number of differentiated

distributions of individual material classes (and even specific artefact types) exist in West Norfolk, and that these distributions are both spatially and chronologically specific. These contrasting spheres of circulation seem to indicate a variety of exchange mechanisms, which might equate to contrasting social identities over time. Accordingly, it is clear that searching for a single 'guiding hand' (such as royal authority) behind the distribution and production of certain material classes is undesirable.

Although it is hard to use artefactual data to distinguish between Early Anglo-Saxon settlement and cemetery, concentrated finds within the Nar-Wissey-Nene land parcel speculatively indicates the existence of a sub-regional territorial unit, perhaps that of the Wissa. This putative territory may well have operated under its own particular social mechanisms, with the abundance of artefactual material perhaps indicating less centralised control over exchange.

In the Middle Anglo-Saxon period we can see the emergence of a great diversity of access to and consumption of material culture which argues against uniform control of many commodities, including Ipswich Ware. In particular, the distribution of imported ceramics suggests that certain Continental wares were being used differently at different sites and perhaps also distributed in different ways. The circulation of coinage also indicates a number of different modes of coin use over time, such as monetary use between c.680 and c.750, and socially embedded exchange both before and after this. In this respect, the fact that Middle Anglo-Saxon coinage is found in all landscape zones of West Norfolk might suggest that, despite changes in the use of coin, the control of coin circulation by central elites was never very easy. Finds of coinage from potentially competing elite controlled Anglo-Saxon mints and Frisia reinforces this notion.

In the Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon periods we start to see the emergence of differentiated settlement types in the Fenland and the Western Escarpment. While in the Late Anglo-Saxon period there are indications of a degree of settlement specialisation although, interestingly, not all groups of 'high status' material culture

have the same distribution. The emergence of rural Thetford Ware kilns suggests entrepreneurial, as opposed to strictly controlled, production.

Although surface-finds are widely distributed throughout the rural landscape of Norfolk and West Norfolk, there are clearly interpretative limitations to these unstratified data. For example, while individual objects might suggest strong Scandinavian influence, it is uncertain what this actually means in a Late Anglo-Saxon landscape exhibiting broad continuities in settlement pattern with the preceding Middle Anglo-Saxon period. As a result, suspected key transformations of the later Ninth and Tenth centuries remain invisible at this level of analysis. A further important caveat is the invisibility, without excavation, of a number of material classes (animal bones or bulk commodities) that might provide a more representative indication of the range of activities, and therefore identities, occurring at settlements.

However, there is still hope. Where Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon rural sites have been sample-excavated in Norfolk, dynamic settlement sequences have often been revealed, dating from the late Sixth to Seventh centuries onwards. As was discussed in Chapter 2, settlement sequences that alter over time are important as they may reflect the imposition and growth of new forms of social relationship. Especially when armed with the interpretative framework provided by extensive material culture datasets, such observations might now be matched to wider social themes, offering a far better opportunity to observe transforming social identities.

## Excavated evidence

### Settlement morphology

There are around thirty part-excavated Anglo-Saxon rural settlements in Norfolk (**Fig. 42**) Comparing this figure to the number of separate findspots of Early Anglo-Saxon brooches - 810 in 2008 - shows how elusive rural settlements are (Rogerson, pers

comm.). In addition, many settlements are revealed in advance of development and cannot always be excavated in a way that allows specific questions of settlement transformation to be addressed, as noted in Lincolnshire by Ulmschneider (2000a). Furthermore, although parts of Early Anglo-Saxon sites might be revealed during quarry works at, for example Kilverstone (Garrow et al, 2006), Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon sites sharing locations with modern settlements, are infrequently sampled (Lewis, 2007). Nevertheless, the existing settlement dataset can still reveal some important aspects of morphological transformation.

The best examples of excavated settlement morphologies are the research-led excavation at North Elmham (Wade-Martins, 1980 a and b), and the excavation in advance of development at Redcastle Furze, Thetford (Andrews, 1995). At North Elmham (Central Norfolk), excavations between 1967 and 1971 revealed a settlement interpreted as a rural elite centre associated with an ecclesiastical focus, with an occupation sequence spanning the Eighth to Eleventh centuries. The settlement, originally a rectilinear planned layout defined by large linear ditches and a property boundary, was re-planned at least twice during its existence, with a cemetery introduced in the Eleventh century (**Fig.43**). A similar settlement morphology was also observed at Wicken Bonhunt, Essex, (see Chapter 2).

At Redcastle Furze, Early Anglo-Saxon sunken featured buildings were truncated by Middle Anglo-Saxon enclosures on contrasting alignments (**Fig. 44**). Following this, three phases of Late Anglo-Saxon features were installed, consisting of pitting and enclosures fronting a droveway and street, again on different alignments, relating to the periphery of the emergent urban settlement at Thetford (see **Fig. 45**). However, the observed transformations at the site were seen by the excavators, following the popular models of the time, as emphasising discontinuity between the Early and Middle Anglo-Saxon phases of occupation (Andrews, 1995). Reappraisal of Redcastle Furze might instead argue that, as opposed to settlement dislocation, we are actually observing important changes *within* a single community via transforming functional zones, from agricultural settlement to a formally planned polyfocal site.

Less extensively excavated sites, including sites with an uncertain level of elite presence, also feature rectilinear boundaries and dynamically transforming Middle to Late Anglo-Saxon settlement sequences. At Sedgeford (Chapter 9), Middle Anglo-Saxon, Mid-Late Ninth century and Late Anglo-Saxon phases of boundaries have been excavated; the cemetery at this site is also an increasingly important functional zone over time (Cabot, et al, 2004; see Chapter 9). At Middle Harling, ditches and structures were replaced a number of times on different alignments from the Middle Anglo-Saxon period through to the Saxo-Norman period at a site that is unexceptional, in artefactual terms at least (Rogerson, 1995; **Fig. 46**). At Grimston, excavations at Holly Tree Farm and Vong Lane, revealed a huge amount of rectilinear boundary replacement between the Eleventh and Thirteenth centuries at a site primarily associated with specialised pottery production and not necessarily elite occupation (Leah, 1994, **Fig. 47**, and see Chapter 6 for more detailed discussion). Dynamic sequences of boundary replacement in association with specialised production are also present in urban contexts, but less completely sampled: for example the Eleventh to Thirteenth century sequence at Fullers Hill, Great Yarmouth (**Fig. 48**; Rogerson, 1976, 131-234).These sites appear to suggest that dynamic settlement sequences, characterised by the regular replacement of rectilinear boundaries, was the norm in Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon rural Norfolk.

In addition to planned sites based on rectilinear units, Reynolds (2003) also identified Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon rural settlements based on more organic enclosures layout (Chapter 2). This phenomenon of 'organic enclosures' planned around droveways (also known as Butterwic-type settlements, Leahy, 2003) might also be evident at the fen-edge site at Downham Market, where five phases of replaced boundaries, including an early droveway, were recovered (Percival and Trimble, 2008) (**Fig.49**). Here, due to the lack of associated coinage or metalwork, the excavators suggested that this site was a 'humble settlement', either seasonal or permanent, that served the 'productive' estate centres (*ibid* 333), as is suggested at a number of the Norfolk fenland sites (Hamerow, 2002, 125).

Sample excavation at the fenland sites, including Terrington St. Clements and Walpole St. Andrew (Crowson et al, 2005) have also produced evidence for dynamic sequences of boundary replacement, although not enough to suggest that the sites are planned around droveways (**Fig. 50**, **Fig. 51**). A similar picture is also beginning to emerge for Lincolnshire, for example, at Chopdike Grove, Gosberton (Crowson et al, 2005), and Fishtoft (Cope-Faulkner, forthcoming). A key question for these fen sites is to what extent boundary creation is a response to the imposition of new social relationships, such as a new need to manage livestock on an intensive basis, or do they represent a more prosaic response to periodically flooded sites?

As well as the planned rectilinear and organic enclosure sites, Reynolds (2003; see Chapter 2) also identified sub-circular enclosed settlements that emerge in the Middle Anglo-Saxon period and potentially reflect secular manorial sites, ecclesiastical sites or enclosed settlements of freemen (Blair 1998, 124–30; Beresford 1987; Reynolds 1999, 144; Loveluck, 2009, 3). Recent excavations in Norfolk have recovered a Middle Anglo-Saxon site of this type at Whissonsett (Central Norfolk), apparently comprising a large oval enclosure, with settlement and cemetery remains in the interior (Mellor, 2004, Trimble, 2006). Another undated site of near identical morphology, c.100m in diameter, has recently been observed as a cropmark feature by the Norfolk Mapping Programme (NMP) at Gressenhall, and attributed to the Middle to Late Anglo-Saxon periods (Horlock et al., 2008, 344; **Fig. 52**).This emerging evidence suggests that there is a good possibility of discrete site morphologies relating to contrasting modes of undocumented elite identities in Norfolk.

**Excavated Material Culture**

Where settlements have been excavated, material culture evidence is frequently present. Importantly, excavation leads to the recovery of artefact types and material classes that are not regularly observed during surface find recovery. One notable type of artefact is decorated vessel glass, imported from the continent, which has

been recovered at sites such as Sedgeford and North Elmham. It has been suggested that finds of vessel glass, dating from the Eighth and Ninth centuries onwards, represent a genuine high-status commodity (Näsman, 1986, 66), increasingly associated with the ever more conspicuous practice of feasting in Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon rural society (Loveluck, 2009, 151-2).

Importantly, excavations at the range of rural Norfolk sites discussed above have also recovered material classes relating to production (both craft and industry) and archaeo-environmental remains. These data can be used to narrate a variety of transforming aspects of social identities relating to these usually less visible commodities (Anderton ed. 1999, Moreland 2000b). Archaeo-environmental remains, including preserved seeds and pollen, as well as animal bones, are a hugely important resource for reconstructing early medieval economies. Archaeo-botanical assemblages from East Anglia, for example, now include both 'consumer' (Ipswich and Brandon, Suffolk) and 'producer' assemblages (Hay Green, Terrington St. Clements, Norfolk) (Crowson et al. 2005). This offers a future opportunity for the comparison of access to different plant resources, and intra-settlement processing of plant materials between settlements, that might indicate different aspects of social structure (Whyman, 2002, 168). However, perhaps the single most informative material class from excavated sites are faunal remains.

Animals maintained a huge ideological significance for Early Anglo-Saxon people, as evidenced through remains, and depictions on artwork, associated with funerary related material culture (Crabtree, 1995, 20-26; Bond, 1996; 76-88). As time progresses, animals are increasingly viewed as a resource that in some sense could be regarded as 'property' (Sykes, forthcoming, 21). Transformations in the pattern of animal exploitation might therefore reveal major transformations in social identities. In particular, a key debate, given that the food supply of the *emporia* has traditionally been portrayed as largely dependent on supplies which the ruling elite could procure by legalised extortion (O'Connor, 1994, 141), concerns whether we can see the emergence of Middle Anglo-Saxon sites involved in specialised animal husbandry in rural areas .

In Norfolk and West Norfolk, a crude analysis of species respresented suggests contrasting site signatures, hinting at different animal exploitation patterns that change over time. For example, at Redcastle Furze the Early Anglo-Saxon site is dominated by the three main domesticates sheep/goat, cattle and pig, with cattle predominant. By the Late Anglo-Saxon period huge transformations have occurred with more equal proportions of cattle to sheep/goat but a significant amount of domestic and wild fowl and wild mammals now present (**Fig. 54**). These transformations are also mirrored by a number of gradual changes in the use of other material classes, such as ceramics (**Fig. 53**), perhaps indicating that a number of important social transformations were taking place at the site between the Early Anglo-Saxon period and the Late Anglo-Saxon period.

In contrast, at North Elmham, where there is a very sharp break in ceramic traditions between the Middle Anglo-Saxon occupation (Period 1) and the late Ninth to Tenth century occupation (Period 2) (Wade Martins, 1980b, 419-440; **Fig. 28**) there is a far less distinct transformation in animal exploitation when considering the main domesticates of sheep/goat, cattle and pig (ibid., 375-412). Cattle remains are 30% of the assemblage through all phases, whilst sheep/goat increases from 37 to 45% between Periods 1 and 2. In contrast, pigs decrease between phases 1 and 2, although perhaps not by enough to suggest widespread change in animal exploitation patterns, as was possible at Flixborough, N.Lincs (Dobney et al. 2007). This is in stark contrast to the pattern observed at Sedgeford (see Chapter 9, p.350-351) which suggests a complete transformation in animal exploitation from a sheep and dairy dominated assemblage to one characterised by cattle and meat consumption (Poole, forthcoming). Interestingly, Period 2 at North Elmham, as with the later phases at Sedgeford (see Chapter 9, p.350-351), saw the introduction of wild mammals for the first time, a trend that is enhanced significantly by Period 3 (the Eleventh century).

Finally, although the animal bone assemblages are not particularly large, and therefore not necessarily representative, the assemblages from Fenland evaluation

sites exhibit a number of contrasting features (**Fig. 55**). For example, the Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon phases at West Walton were dominated by sheep (Crowson et al, 2005; Chapter 11), which appears to be in keeping with the historical 'sheep and corn' trend of the West Norfolk region (Williamson, 2003, 22-3). In contrast, the Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon phases at Hay Green, Terrington St. Clement, were dominated by cattle, but with a kill-off pattern for both sheep and cattle (older animals) suggesting that the animals were being exploited for both wool and meat throughout the settlement's life (Baker, 2002, 2005). The Middle Anglo-Saxon assemblage at Walpole St. Andrew, exhibits a further pattern, suggesting an emphasis on meat, with 60% of sheep at the site killed at an age of 2 years or under and a number of juvenile/sub-adult cattle present in the assemblage (including calves aged between 7-10 months)(Baker, 2002, 2005). A key question at Walpole St. Andrew is whether the animal remains indicate a site where meat was consumed or one where locally raised meat was transported off site, perhaps to estate centres, as envisaged by Hamerow (2002, 125). A similar situation to Walpole St. Andrew has also been noted at the Lincolnshire site of Mornington House, Gosberton, where juvenile cattle dominated (Crowson et al, 2005), perhaps indicating that sites with meat orientated economies were a phenomenon of the Fenland.

So, how should the apparent diversity of faunal signatures from Norfolk and West Norfolk be interpreted? Firstly, both high status and lower-order 'producer' sites can now be seen to have had equally diverse functional profiles. For example, North Elmham's mixed economy can be contrasted strongly with sheep-dominated Middle Anglo-Saxon Sedgeford (see Chapter 9). Both sites are also very different from Wicken Bonhunt (Essex) (Wade, 1980) which may have been a site under royal elite patronage engaged in specialised pork production for consumption away from the site. This suggests that while it might have once been easy to see rural centres as autonomous smallholders with little specialisation (Carver, 1994, 1), we now have to allow for a complex hierarchy of consumer and producer sites engaged in their own spheres of production and distribution (Saunders, 2001, 7-13). This sits uneasily with Crabtree's (2010, 131) observation that a degree of specialisation occurred

exclusively at the Fenland sites and within a context of hierarchical relations with the *emporia*.

A final aspect of animal bone assemblages that might help to distinguish rural elite identities as time progresses is the emergence of wild species in the diet at rural sites. There is good evidence that hunting and, by proxy, the exploitation of wild resources, was increasingly important as a statement of thegnly rural lifestyle by the Late Anglo-Saxon period (Sykes, forthcoming; Senecal, 2001, 251-266). At this time, wild birds and mammals, in addition to domestic fowl, all start to appear at the rural elite sites of Norfolk, North Elmham for example. This was also the case at an even earlier date at Flixborough, N. Lincs., where a high proportion of wild birds, cetaceans and deer were exploited by rural elites in the Eighth century (Dobney et al, 2007). This can be contrasted with the *emporia* which feature a low proportion of wild animals and a meat diet dominated by sheep/goat and cattle staples (O'Connor, 1991, 276-287), until commercialisation in the Late Anglo-Saxon period allows for more control over provisions, with resources such as fish being increasingly exploited (Sykes, forthcoming, 22). In conclusion, it might be possible to link the exploitation of wild animals to local rural elite identities. This is considered in Chapter 9.

In addition to faunal remains, excavated material indicative of production, craft and industry represents a final group of activities vastly under-represented during interpretation of surface finds assemblage. This is due to the difficulties of dating such material. Indeed, this material is even rare at excavated sites in eastern England. The only site where Middle Anglo-Saxon briquetage relating to the process of salt production has certainly been excavated is Fishtoft in the Lincolnshire fens (Cope-Faulkner, forthcoming, 176), although there is a feeling that a number of lead hoards containing buckets may have been associated with the process of salt evaporation, for example those at Westerleigh Waterless and Tatershall (Hinton, 2000, Loveluck, pers comm.). However, the excavation of rural sites such as Flixborough, N Lincs, where over 16 kilograms of loom weights relating to the production of fine quality cloth were recovered from later Ninth century deposits, shows that good evidence for specialist artisan activity might more frequently be

retrieved from the excavation of rural sites (Walton Rogers, 2007, 31; Loveluck, 2004, 94). At Ramsbury, Wiltshire, iron-smelting and smithing evidence dating to the Eighth and Ninth centuries has been excavated at a Middle Anglo-Saxon estate centre (Haslam, 1980). In Norfolk itself, excavation has recovered evidence for Anglo-Saxon iron smelting from a variety of sites, including those without obvious status elements such as an Early Anglo-Saxon example, at Brettenham (Salter, 2002) and an enigmatic Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon site at Tasburgh (Bayley, 1992).

The identification of Early Anglo-Saxon metalworking in Norfolk offers new perspectives on the importance of industrial production at certain rural sites; activities that must have defined the identity of many settlements as much as the more visible aspects of trade and exchange (Wickham, 2008, 20-21). Traditional approaches have used the presence of resident industrial and craft activities as key criteria by which to distinguish proto-urban settlements (Hodges, 1982, 197). However, the fact that industrial activity at rural sites in Norfolk might pre-date the flourishing of the *emporia* indicates that rural production, and therefore specialised communities, may have been able to provide impetus for the economic development of the *emporia* and not *vice versa* (Moreland, 2000b, 99, Hodges, 2000, 26-7).

Unfortunately, although analysis of different aspects of craft and industrial production from excavated sites might eventually allow us to identify a variety of early social identities, there is at present insufficient data with which to do this on a systematic basis. However, if we re-analyse specific Norfolk data then, as with the animal bone resource, there are indications that we might be able to use excavation data to identify transformations over time at rural sites. For example, at Redcastle Furze, a wider variety of metal artefact types (including metalworking tools) lost during the Late Anglo-Saxon period is also accompanied by a noticeable increase in discarded metalworking debris (**Fig. 56**, **Fig. 57**). In this case, the discarded artefacts and production residues seem to indicate the contemporary emergence of metal production and a diversification of the functional profile of the site, perhaps as the

site is transformed within the emergent polyfocal urban area (Andrews, 1995; see above).

At North Elmham, although evidence of production was absent, there are indications that access to different metals and types of object (iron and copper alloy) might have changed over time (Wade-Martins, 1980, b). Most notably, the proportion of iron objects decreases over time as copper alloy increases. Perhaps by the Eleventh century iron had become a more valuable commodity and was recycled more frequently (as might also be the case on the Fen-edge), perhaps indicating a reduction in site status. However, at the same time there is also an increase in wild animal remains which might indicate the rise of a high status thegnly lifestyle (Wade-Martins, 1980b, 375-405). These apparently opposing status indicators reinforce the importance of considering all material classes from sites.

## Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to use the distribution of key early medieval material classes in Norfolk and West Norfolk, and an analysis of the various approaches to this material, to highlight a number of interpretative themes. Most evidently, it has became apparent that different material classes such as coinage, pottery and metalwork, sometimes illustrate different aspects of lifestyles, social relations and probable identities. Furthermore, although not as systematically distributed in the landscape, excavated evidence indicates that settlement morphologies and patterns of production and consumption can also be used to illustrate further aspects of rural lifestyles. Most importantly, a consideration of the excavated evidence of rural sites in Norfolk and West Norfolk has demonstrated that, at some sites, lifestyle changes over time, often with a number of transformations between 450 and 1100.

So, although the evidence of pottery, coinage and metalwork alone perhaps overemphasises the economic aspects of circulation and distribution, *combining*

these observations with excavated morphologies and material classes provides further insight into changing settlement character. Key transformations that can be explored in West Norfolk include the emergence of specialised sites in the Fenland and their relationship with estate centres that might be equated with as yet unidentified rural elites. However, as excavation of all sites is clearly beyond the realistic remit of a doctoral study, a compromise methodology must be found. It is therefore suggested that systematic integrated field survey should be undertaken at the six 'productive' sites previously defined in West Norfolk (Rogerson, 2003, 110-21), as well as a 'control' site that has not previously been labelled as such. This approach will hopefully allow for detailed interpretation of the potential diversity, complexity and changing lifestyles to be made at these sites that can then be re-integrated with wider themes raised in this chapter. The detailed methodology, analytical approaches and rationale behind this approach -the main body of this thesis - are presented in the following chapter.

# Chapter 4: Specific Methodology and Case-Study Sites

## Introduction

Having considered the key methodological and theoretical issues surrounding the exploration and interpretation of social identities in early medieval rural contexts, it is now appropriate to set out a detailed methodology for an integrated investigation of West Norfolk sites. The overarching aim of this survey and site interpretation is to highlight the diversity, complexity and changing lifestyles of the selected sites. Following on from Chapter 3, aspects of social identities observed at the sites might then be matched to wider transformations within Anglo-Saxon society. These case-studies form the bulk of detailed data presentation in Chapters 5-11. However, before explaining the detailed methodology we need to summarise, in the light of Chapters 2 and 3, why it is so important to target case-study sites with integrated survey methods.

Chapter 3 demonstrated that Anglo-Saxon period material culture is widespread in the landscape of Norfolk and West Norfolk, and that an investigation of rural settlement patterns and hierarchies is perfectly possible. By using the material culture evidence of trade and exchange, it seemed that we might be able to identify a complex multi-tiered hierarchy of sites consisting of both producers and consumers, as well as a number of contrasting identities, including elite identities. Sites in receipt of regional and continental imported material culture might traditionally be regarded as specialised within these hierarchies, but subsequent analysis has demonstrated that they do not appear to be restricted to certain

landscape zones. In West Norfolk, for example, imports occur from the fen-edge to the upland.

At present, however, the level of investigation at most Norfolk settlements is not extensive enough to allow for further interpretation. In particular, as the level of investigation at different foci is of variable intensity and quality, being mostly restricted to the reporting of surface finds, it was hard to ascertain how representative of past activity material culture 'signatures' were. This, of course, was a fundamental problem raised in Chapter 2 when discussing the appropriateness of interpretations surrounding the 'productive' sites. Despite this, when the analysis of artefact classes was combined, certain West Norfolk 'centres' *are* clearly prominent within the wider settlement hierarchy. The six 'productive' sites previously identified by Rogerson for coastal West Norfolk all fall within this group (2003, 2005).

Chapter 3 concluded that a combined systematic investigation of material culture profiles *and* settlement morphology is now required to explore changing settlement character. Indeed, where excavations or exceptionally detailed surveys *have* been undertaken at rural 'centres', there already seem to be indications that a variety of complex settlements existed, characterised by apparently planned layouts, locations close to important communication routes and engagement in both production and consumption. Rural centres - and therefore by implication the elite presence – can also be seen to transform in character over time (as at Flixborough, Loveluck, 2007b, 147-156).

It was decided to undertake integrated elements of field survey to address the above issues. Clearly, within the acceptable framework of PhD research, this work could not be completely comprehensive. Accordingly, it was necessary to produce a methodology that resolved the problems of past work while maximising opportunities to produce new narratives for the selected sites. An important aspect of this was the rationale behind sample selection. In particular, it is felt that the location, previous work and general representativeness of the evidence at selected

sites should be highlighted before discussing the specific methods and techniques to be employed.

## The Case-Study Sites

Given that West Norfolk is a region of contrasting environmental and topographic settings, resulting in 'distinctive landscapes, economies, and societies' (Williamson, 1993, 7), it was decided that the selected case-study sites must incorporate the fullest possible range of those settings. Thankfully, the six West Norfolk 'productive' sites identified by Rogerson (2003, 110-21) are situated in a range of different locations and provide a satisfactory sample. A seventh case-study site, at Sedgeford, selected to see whether common or contrasting patterns to the 'productive' sites might also be observed at an unlabelled site, features a further contrasting topographic situation. The location, topography and search history pertaining to the seven selected case-study sites is now discussed (**Fig. 58**).

## Wormegay

The Fen-edge parish of Wormegay, 8km southeast of Kings Lynn, incorporates two present-day settlements: Wormegay village in the centre west of the parish, and the hamlet of West Briggs, a kilometre to the southwest. The now canalised valley of the River Nar is an important landscape feature in the parish, forming its northern boundary. The digging of numerous drains during the medieval period enabled the peat fens to be cultivated and created extensive areas of pasture (Silvester, 1988, 143, 150).

The western extent of Wormegay 'island' (**Fig. 59**), the most prominent topographic feature in the area, is separated from West Briggs by a narrow channel. This channel, crossing the fens at the narrowest place, appears to have been an important feature controlling access and movement of people as early as prehistoric times, something

re-emphasised by the creation of a motte here in the medieval period (Silvester, 1988, 144). A Roman routeway here, from the upland running west to the fens (Smallwood, 2006, 10-12), might have provided the impetus for the Second to Fourth century activity of an uncertain nature, suggested by pottery and ironworking slag and located discontinuously on the southern half of Wormegay 'island' (Silvester, 1988, 145).

Wormegay 'island', an outcrop of sandy mineral soil (c.10m AOD) surrounded by peat, lies immediately south of the River Nar and is at present on dry land (Silvester, 1988, 144). Its northern side slopes almost imperceptibly towards the Nar, but the southern half, where the main Anglo-Saxon site is located, is quite pronounced (**Fig. 60**). Both Pestell (2004) and Silvester (1988) have noted that the 'sense of isolation' that was 'undoubtedly' a feature of the Wormegay environs (Silvester, 1988, 143) might have been an important feature for the development of a settlement here.

The Anglo-Saxon site was initially identified during fieldwalking by the Fenland survey (Silvester 1988, 143-150), and targeted follow-up work (Andrews, 1992, p.21, Fig. 7). Metal detecting, carried out consistently by one individual, Mr. Steve Brown (Rogerson, 2003, 118-21) has subsequently recovered a number of artefacts, providing a sample that can be considered representative of the totality of buried remains although, unfortunately, as some finds do not have detailed findspots recorded, their interpretative potential is somewhat reduced. In terms of topographical setting and the discrete nature of concentrated Anglo-Saxon findspots, the site at Wormegay is very similar to Bawsey. However, the surface finds evidence alone indicates a site restricted mainly to Middle Anglo-Saxon activity. It was therefore felt that this site would offer some important contrasts to other sites with important Late Anglo-Saxon phases.

## Congham (with Grimston)

The present day village of Congham is a relatively small entity consisting of a few dispersed farmsteads and a built-up zone situated either side of an east-west road that runs from lower ground in the west (towards the Fen Edge) to a larger north-

south road to the east (now the B1153) (**Fig. 61**, **Fig. 62**). This north-south road follows the boundary between two distinct superficial geological zones: the high land of the Chalk Scarp to the east, and the sandy soils of the West Norfolk Lowland to the west upon which Congham is situated. Further west still (beyond the western extent of the present day village) heavier clay soils can also be found (Dymond 1985, 29).

Grimston parish lies adjacent to the southern boundary of Congham parish. Just over a kilometre south of Congham Village lie the two main settlements in Grimston parish: Grimston village itself and, to the west, the settlement of Pott Row, which appears to be a later common-edge development adjacent to a crossroads (Leah, 1994, 1). The geological picture is the same as for Congham, although Pott Row is situated exclusively on areas fringing heavier clay soils.

The Anglo-Saxon site at Congham, consisting of multiple activity foci, is strung out along a NNW to SSW aligned strip, 1km in length, centred on the putative prehistoric routeway, the 'Icknield Way '(Rogerson, 2003, 115). Immediately north of the Anglo-Saxon 'site' lies a spring that is an east-west aligned tributary of the River Babingley, which flows into the Wash adjacent to Castle Rising. The site has been detected consistently by the late John Wells and Pat Wells since 1993 in a detailed and systematic manner (*ibid*, 115). It therefore offers an excellent opportunity to try and unlock the research potential of a very complex and long-lived site, with strong Early, Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon components.

Furthermore, an almost conjoined sprawl of settlement foci, with distinct nuclei but merged peripheries, seems to be a phenomenon of the landscape zone around the 'Icknield Way' in West Norfolk. Because of this, it was decided to incorporate a consideration of the adjacent settlement focus at Grimston to place the 'productive' site at Congham within a wider context of settlement evolution (**Fig. 85**).

Since the 1960s and following initial excavations by amateur archaeologist John Nicholls, Grimston has become well known as an important centre for ceramic

production, which commenced in the Late Anglo-Saxon period and became established between the Eleventh and Sixteenth centuries (Leah 1994). At its height in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth centuries, ceramics from the Grimston pottery industry catered for the flourishing region of eastern England and were also exported as far afield as Sweden (Dunning, 1968, 35-38). A number of small excavations in Grimston have recovered kilns, structures and enclosures of Late Anglo-Saxon date onwards (Leah, 1994).

## Rudham

The sizeable paired villages of East and West Rudham are situated at a height of c.50-60m AOD in rolling upland covered with sandy soils known as the 'Good Sands': a landscape zone that can successfully be improved for agricultural purposes (Williamson, 1993, 11). Rudham is the most inland of the West Norfolk 'productive' sites, located 20km east of the West Norfolk coast, and 10km north of Kings Lynn. The two villages are actually located on the eastern side of the boundary of Norfolk's central watershed, within a valley tributary at the source of the east draining River Wensum (Rogerson, 2003, 116). As such, the Rudhams' might more accurately be described as located at the point at which West Norfolk becomes central Norfolk; a location which could be considered significant in terms of possibilities for communication and territorial control.

The potential geographic significance of the watershed boundary is corroborated by the archaeological evidence around the Rudham environs during the Prehistoric period. A number of Neolithic flints (NHER 28131) and a rare long barrow (NHER 3611), are located only 2km south of West Rudham. Slightly later, a series of Bronze Age barrows have also been observed south of West Rudham (NHER 3625). Finds of Iron Age metalwork, including coins, brooches and a terret ring, have also been recovered from the location of the Anglo-Saxon site in West Rudham.

The micro-positioning of the modern villages at first glance seems topographically obscure. Both villages are strung out along a main east-west aligned route, also the edge of common land, elevated at the top of a low ridge east of East Rudham, but dropping into the valley at West Rudham. The result is that the present settlement at West Rudham does not control any significant view-shed or line of sight. It is only looking south, on elevated ground c.350m north of the present settlement (NHER 32133), that the landscape can be properly understood. At this point, the position of the existing Church in West Rudham, St. Peters, can be seen to control the 'low' road through the area (**Fig. 63**) In this respect, although the popular interpretation of the place-name Rudham is 'homestead or farm of a man named Rudda' (OE ham) (Mills, 2003, 398), an alternative interpretation, that suits the topographic situation of West Rudham in particular, is 'Rudda's hemmed-in land' (OE hamm) (CDEPN, 512, DEPN, 395, Mills, 2003, 398).

It has been suggested that an understanding of the Roman routeways in the area would significantly improve our understanding of the Anglo-Saxon settlement in the Rudham environs (Rogerson, 2003, 116). The main Roman routeway, the Peddars Way, runs on a northwest to southeast alignment c.6km west of West Rudham (Gurney, 2005, 29), it is not impossible that it was intersected at right angles by an unknown east to west aligned routeway which passed close-by (or through) the Rudhams. Surface finds relating to a Roman masonry building have been recovered on the boundary between East and West Rudham parishes, 500m south of the main routeway through the villages (NHER 30883). It is possible that this site was linked to a north-east to south-west aligned stretch of Roman road, now reflected by the fork of road that passes south of St Peters Church, West Rudham, before following the line of the river and then joining the main road through East Rudham (Rogerson, 2003, 116).

The Anglo-Saxon material from 'Rudham' is actually at least two geographically separate 'sites' divided into the parishes of West Rudham and East Rudham (Rogerson, 2003, 116). The main 'productive' site in West Rudham was discovered in 1991 by Mr. D. Fox and Mr. P. West, and the sites at both West and East Rudham

have subsequently been detected since 1994 by Mr. B and Mr. A. Mears, although there has been less opportunity to detect at East Rudham (*ibid*). The distribution of metal finds can be seen as a reasonably consistent reflection of genuine concentrations. The site at West Rudham is currently the West Norfolk site producing the largest amount of new data, and it was hoped that detailed investigation of this site might provide an opportunity to observe and interpret contrasting mechanisms of trade and exchange to some of the coastal sites.

## Burnham

Burnham Market, is a substantial modern village of apparent medieval plan, and is located on the Chalk scarp, 3km south of the north Norfolk coast. Analysis of the existing settlement morphology suggests that the medieval *market* town developed around a narrow green or street that forms the east-west arm of a crossroads (Crowson, 1997, 2). This central street also runs along the course of the Goose Beck, an east-west aligned tributary of the north-south aligned River Burn. The Goose Beck runs east through the present village and joins the River Burn. The River Burn then flows north off the Good Sands plateau into the North Sea (Rogerson, 2003, 114). A recent unpublished auger survey east of the built-up village suggested that the Goose Beck widens in a slightly flattened valley at the estuary with the River Burn (Godwin, 2003), and it is postulated that this would have provided a safe haven, now silted-up, for early medieval coastal traffic (Rogerson, 2003, 114) (**Fig. 64**).

Prior to 1983, little was known about the nature of early medieval settlement in the Burnham environs. However, in that year, fieldwalking by John Smallwood re-discovered the main Anglo-Saxon activity focus as a surface scatter of Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon artefacts, apparently lying immediately east of the present built-up focus of Burnham Market (Rogerson, 2003, 114). Since 1990, metal detecting in this area has demonstrated that this is an exceptional site lying on both the north and south sides of the Goose Beck.

Burnham, similarly to Bawsey, has already been labelled variously as an early emporium (Whyman 2002), a 'productive site' (Andrews, 1992, Rogerson, 2003, 114), a possible '*wic*' (Percival, unpublished, Penn, 1999, 3), and 'a small trading *emporia*' (Watkins, 2007, 4) akin to the 'Type A *Emporia*' defined by Hodges (1982). However, although the quantity and quality of the Anglo-Saxon metal finds, including some imported material, clearly reveals that Burnham was a focus of trade and exchange of some significance and status (Crowson, 1997, 3), this labelling is somewhat premature and perpetuates '...inconsistent approaches to site classification...' (Whyman, 2002). So, although Burnham is clearly a fine candidate for a Middle Anglo-Saxon landing place and beach trading site, little was yet known about the morphology or functional profile of the site, which creates a barrier to further interpretation.

## Sedgeford

Sedgeford parish is located 20 km north of Kings Lynn, in upland just east of the northernmost extension of the fen-edge at Snettisham. This part of northwest Norfolk is known as the Good Sands and the underlying geology is of chalk and carrstone, with sand and gravel settled in deep terraces in the river valleys (Williamson, 1993, 16). Sedgeford village itself sits immediately north of the east-west aligned River Heacham which drains into the Wash at Heacham, 5km to the east. The Middle–Late Anglo-Saxon site lies to the south of the river (**Fig. 65**).

The place name Sedgeford (from Old English) means either 'place where sedge grows', or it is a personal name meaning, ford of a man called *Secci* (Mills, 2003). The toponym is important, given that these type of names are thought to be long lived, often occurring near other early names such as those ending in –ham (e.g. Snettisham and Heacham) (Henson, 2006, 70-71). The geographical importance of the 'ford' controlling routeways may have influenced settlement location at Sedgeford, as would the navigability and resources of the tidal River Heacham.

Along the upland chalk ridge east of Sedgeford ran a series of north to south trackways, known generically as the 'Icknield Way' in medieval times which was 'almost certainly' in use as early as the Neolithic period (Rainbird Clarke 1954, 32). This landscape feature may also have provided a catalyst for the development of early settlement foci. A series of seven Roman villas situated along this north to south axis are a testament to the importance of this routeway (Gregory, 1982, Fig 1). The additional existence of the north to south aligned Peddars Way, possibly built by the Roman Military, and located immediately west of Sedgeford, might also have encouraged early settlement (Gurney 1986, 34). There is a strong Romano-British settlement presence in Sedgeford, consisting of farmsteads (NHER 31814, 37295), and a Third-Fourth century villa-style settlement (NHER 1603).

Although Sedgeford is not generally labelled a 'productive' site, it was selected for intensive work as an undocumented pre-conquest site, where ongoing research excavations provide an opportunity for surface find evidence to be calibrated against some excavated data. Of further crucial importance was the fact that data from ongoing field research by the Sedgeford Historical and Archaeological Research Project (SHARP) including excavations, could be used to address in unrivalled detail some of the key questions derived from the other integrated surveys.

## Bawsey

Bawsey parish is located east of the present day fen-edge, only 4km east of the present-day centre of Kings Lynn. Settlement in the modern parish is now sparse, with decline setting in during the later Middle Ages (Darby, 1971, 103; Allison, 1955, 116-162). The decline of Bawsey occurs at the same time as the rise of Kings Lynn, and it has been speculated that the two phenomena are causally linked (Hutcheson, 2006, 103). The so-called 'plantation' town of Lynn first appears documentarily in 1085, emerging within a context of already intricate relationships between contrasting social groups, both ecclesiastical and secular (Parker, 1971, 21-22).

The discrete Anglo-Saxon site at Bawsey is situated on a former fen-edge island, now a prominent hill (maximum 15m AOD), a similar topographic situation to Wormegay. The remains of the church of St. James, largely Norman in date, are extant on the hill (NHER 3328) (**Fig. 66**, **Fig.67**), and a graveyard was apparently in use as late as 1773 (GSB Prospection, 1998.). A prominent oval shape, interpreted as a ditched enclosure surrounding the hill, has been identified by aerial photography (see Rogerson, 2003, 113, Figure 10.2). The superficial soil geology consists of deep sandy colluvial deposits on the slope and base of the hill, overlying coarse loams. The underlying geology is glaciofluvial sand and gravel (GSB Prospection, 1998). The west-draining River Gaywood, which is now a canalised watercourse, lies 100m north of the northern slope of the hill (Rogerson, 2003, 112). Due to higher sea levels, Anglo-Saxon Bawsey may have been adjacent to open water and directly approachable by sea until the Twelfth century, when falling sea levels may have made this difficult (Pestell, 2003, 126).

Metal detecting commenced at Bawsey in 1984 and has revealed a spectacularly 'productive' site, second only to Ipswich in East Anglia in terms of quantities of Anglo-Saxon coin finds (Hutcheson, 2006). Bawsey is mostly unpublished (summaries are provided by Rogerson, 2003, 112-113 and Rogerson *et al*., 2000), yet during the last decade this site has been regularly cited in scholarly works debating the archaeological recognition and interpretation of 'high-status' Middle Anglo-Saxon sites (Reynolds, 1999, 112; Pestell, 2004, 45; Hutcheson, 2006, 93). The discovery of styli at Bawsey has also been used by scholars debating the archaeological definition of secular and ecclesiastical literate communities (Williamson, 1993, 149; Blair, 2005, 204-212; Loveluck, 2001, 79-130). Unfortunately, an important programme of geophysical survey, fieldwalking and trial excavation carried out in 1998 by the Channel Four television programme 'Time Team' remains unpublished (Taylor, 1999, 66-73), although it is currently the subject of a detailed programme of post-excavation analysis (Pestell, forthcoming).

Because of the ongoing post-excavation programme at Bawsey, the site was de-selected for further integrated fieldwork as part of this thesis. The following

presentation of the site therefore draws largely on the aforementioned sources. However, it does collate and present the distribution of all located Anglo-Saxon coin and metalwork finds for the first time, overlaying these data onto existing unpublished geophysical and fieldwalking results. This has allowed for a fuller exploration of the site's morphology and material culture profile than has previously been possible, and should provide some new interpretative insight.

## West Walton

The sizeable modern village of West Walton, at the western extent of the West Norfolk study area, lies a kilometre east of the River Nene in the low-lying Marshland fen that borders Cambridgeshire and Lincolnshire. The present settlement incorporates a loose focus around the medieval church of St.Mary's and a secondary settlement, Walton Highway, to the east, immediately north of the main east-west aligned routeway (now the A47) (Silvester, 1988, 88).

The Fenland Survey demonstrated that roddons - raised silt banks of relict watercourses - were popular foci for human activity in the fens. Recent work such as the Lincolnshire Fens Lidar project (Malone, forthcoming), has demonstrated the complexity and profusion of these potentially habitable zones. At West Walton a north to south aligned roddon ridge, elevated in the landscape to a maximum height of 2m AOD, meets another that then runs west at St Mary's Church to the confluence of the River Nene. The main Anglo-Saxon settlement appears to focus around the Church (**Fig. 68**), with a subsidiary focus 1.6km to the north (Rogerson, 2003, 118). Trial trenches excavated by the Fenland Evaluations confirm that, underneath topsoil (and in places post-Roman silts; Crowson et al, 2005, 174) lie naturally formed, possibly Iron Age, silty clay deposits surrounding the roddons (Silvester, 1988, 89).

As new fieldwork was not undertaken in West Walton as part of this thesis, the site remains the most underexplored of the six West Norfolk 'productive' sites.

Nevertheless, the site has previously been subject to a number of systematic pieces of fieldwork and there are 23 separate NHER entries relating to Anglo-Saxon findspots, covering a north-south area of c.4km, here. The main sites were initially discovered as surface scatters of Middle Anglo-Saxon to medieval pottery during the Fenland Survey (Silvester, 1988, 92). The northern portion of the main site, within a 300m radius of the parish Church, was then subject to further fieldwalking on a more intensive basis, although this survey remains incomplete (Andrews, 1992 fig. 4d). Regular searching with a metal-detector commenced in 1987 (Rogerson, 2003, 118).

The following presentation of West Walton (Chapter 11) aims to draw together the conclusions of three previous publications (Silvester, 1988; Rogerson, 2003; Crowson et al, 2005). In addition, as with Bawsey, the distribution of all located Anglo-Saxon coin and metalwork finds are plotted for the first time and this data are overlaid onto existing fieldwalking results. A fuller exploration of the site's morphology and material culture profile than has previously been possible enables a new updated interpretation of the site to be presented.

## Detailed Methodology

Following the explanation for the selection of the case-study sites, it is necessary to present the detailed survey methodology to be applied to them. The level of work undertaken at the various case-study sites sometimes differs and the rationale for this will be given after discussion of the detailed instigative methods to be applied to the sites.

### Extensive Polygon Analysis

At the widest level of intensive case-study analysis, it was decided to employ an interpretative mapping exercise at the level of the local landscape, a methodology hereafter called '*extensive polygon analysis'*. This technique aims to move beyond previous methodological approaches to 'productive' sites, where detailed spatial

data is often ignored and sites are presented as 'dots on maps' (Ulmschneider, 2003, 79, Fig. 7.3). It was felt that studies that only map sites on a 'macro' scale often emphasise the common features of sites, as opposed to analysing the differences between them. Because of this, important areas of analysis can then be ignored. For example, Hutcheson's presentation of coin findspots from Rudham ignores the fact that this 'productive' site is actually two spatially discrete sites, 1.5km apart, (Hutcheson, 2006, 83, Table 1; Rogerson, 2003, 116-117).

The inspiration behind the design of the *extensive polygon analysis* technique was threefold. Firstly, more intensive landscape analysis of 'productive' sites, for example, that employed by Kevin Leahy for Melton Ross, Lincolnshire, had proved that important interpretative insights could be gained by observing the relationship of surface finds to cropmarks and earthworks (Leahy, 2003, 147, Fig. 12.5). Secondly, the NHER is structured in such a way so that all findspots are already located as either an individual point or a *polygon* within the landscape. A *polygon* is simply a line drawn around the boundary of an agricultural field that produces three or more findspots. As these polygons already exist for much of the landscape of West Norfolk on an *Exegesis* database, they provide a ready-made basic unit of analysis. Thirdly, methodological principles for *polygon* analysis have already been developed within the English Heritage sponsored technique known as Historic Landscape Characterisation. Historic Landscape Characterisation produces a series of contrasting colours and layers of *polygons* reflecting different aspects of the historic landscape such as ancient fields and enclosed fields (Fairclough, 1999). Once presented, these polygons represent a powerful interpretative tool for observing patterns of historic land-use, and provide a base-map against which distributions of material culture can be interpreted.

It was decided that the Norfolk HER polygons and points data relating to Anglo-Saxon findspots would be represented against a map base of built-up, non-cultivated and wooded areas to emphasise potential searchable land. The resulting patterns would therefore be able to demonstrate how real the apparent extent of a site was. Attempting to identify the potential extent of a site was the first goal of the polygon

analysis, bearing in mind that amateur detecting or field-walking is often unsystematic. The second goal of the analysis was to attempt to use the polygons to identify changing patterns of Anglo-Saxon settlement and land-use. This was achieved by plotting the interpreted material culture polygons for each selected case-study site by *period*. This methodology is now outlined.

The NHER *Exegesis* database, classifies *finds* and *events* by standardised descriptions and periods. These are Pagan Saxon (411-650 AD), Middle Saxon (650-850 AD) and Late Saxon (850-1066 AD). All material dating to these periods listed on the database was catalogued. The *Exegesis* database also records an OS grid co-ordinate for each entry which was converted into a table of grid-references via an *Excel* database. These data were then imported into *Arc View*, a GIS (Geographical Information System) incorporating an Ordnance Survey map base (© Crown Copyright/database right 2010. An Ordance survey/EDINA supplied service). The final presentation of the figures was carried out via the computer-aided design package AutoCAD.

A full catalogue of the NHER data, duplicating the Exegesis database, is viewable at http://www.heritage.norfolk.gov.uk/SimpleSearch.aspx . It is advised that those who wish to explore the NHER entries listed in Chapters 5-11 use this index which replaces the need for a copious paper Appendix which would simply repeat this information. The material on the database consists almost entirely of surface finds of pottery and metalwork, occasionally animal bone and undated evidence of production (such as metalworking residue). Occasionally sites have metalwork signatures that have already been interpreted as cemeteries (NHER3573 and NHER15404), but otherwise it was assumed that the majority of evidence was related to permanent settlement or to temporary occupation/activity.

To interpret the polygon data, a series of hachures and colours showing the range (not quantities) of material classes from the sites were overlaid onto the polygon data. The interpretative categories allocated were Pottery, Personal Metalwork and Functional Metal Object (evidence for Production was also noted) (see **Fig. 69**). The

aim was to enable some analysis of variations in material culture loss patterns over the Early, Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon/Medieval periods.

Splitting metal objects into 'personal metalwork' and 'functional metal objects' is a highly crude and somewhat subjective way of analysing different functions relating to consumption. Personal metalwork is any artefact (ferrous or non-ferrous) that could be worn as personal adornment (brooches, pins, strap fittings, belt buckles etc), while functional metal objects include weights, tokens, styli, ingots, etc. Clearly, a number of different functions can be represented within each group. For example, people could wear 'personal metalwork' and lose it at either a habitation or market/fair focus. The crucial difference defining 'functional metalwork' is that it is more likely to represent the carrying out of activities and not only the activity of consumption represented by the lost artefact. These activities may directly affect wider spheres of social interaction. For example, exchange of goods, assessing the relative value of other materials (weights) or record keeping (styli). The implication is that 'functional' artefacts, while not forgetting important considerations of discard patterns and site formation processes, must represent a degree of social control or social organisation occurring where we find them.

It is hoped that depicting surface artefact scatters by date and range of activities represented, while considering land-use and retrieval history, will allow transformations to functional zones at settlement sites to be observed, for example, zones of trade/ exchange represented by metalwork loss such as weights and tokens, habitation (strap ends and brooches), cultivation (pottery) and waste disposal (bone and shell). These observations, in turn, will hopefully enable certain areas to be targeted by superimposed survey.

## Superimposed Survey Methodology

Following the identification of relevant activity zones using the extensive polygon analysis, certain areas can be interrogated further with a number of superimposed survey techniques. The aim is to identify potential features of both settlement

morphology and associated material culture that might inform about the diversity, complexity and changing lifestyles evidenced at these sites.

**Fieldwalking**

The first technique employed at the case-study sites was intensive grid-based fieldwalking. It was hoped that plotting the distributions of a full range of surface material from case-study sites would, firstly, allow for the extent of the sites to be assessed and, secondly, allow for observations to be made about potential functional zones within sites.

The work of fieldwalking surveys such as the Fenland survey (Silvester, 1988) has allowed numerous Anglo-Saxon sites to be identified. As noted in Chapter 2, however, past surveys in East Anglia (Newman, 2006; Lawson, 1983), although they successfully identified both settlement patterns and land-use patterns at specific settlements (such as Witton, NE Norfolk), have not always interpreted these sites as fully as possible. This issue was noted quite recently by Jones (2004) who suggested that instead of simply identifying sites, fieldwalking might also be employed to achieve a deeper analysis of ceramic scatters (Jones, 2004, 162-163). However, *contra* Jones, who concentrates on the nuances of pottery scatters indicative of cultivated land, it was hoped that the fieldwalking undertaken at the West Norfolk case-study sites might also be used to identify contrasting zones within habitation areas, as hypothesised by Schofield (1989) or Schiffer (1987). If, for example, differential patterns of rubbish discard are identifiable, such as surface middening or waste disposal in boundary features/pits, it might tentatively indicate contrasting aspects of social identities (Reynolds, 2003).

The field walking technique employed was intensive grid-based fieldwalking, based on a system of 20m x 20m grids divided into 10m x 10 m collection units. A similar system has been used to great effect by other projects investigating medieval settlements such as the Shapwick project (Gerrard, 2007, 125-130, 1995, 1997). This

method of surface collection observes 100% of the walked field and is more intensive than walking 20m spaced linear transects, the method recommended by Norfolk Landscape Archaeology for identifying sites, which provides a 10% viewed sample of walked land (Gurney, 2003). However, as the fieldwalking was targeting known 'sites', this method was deemed most appropriate.

The fieldwalking retained all diagnostic ceramics and other artefacts earlier than post-medieval for identification by Dr. A. Rogerson (Norfolk Landscape Archaeology). The aim was to plot the distribution of diverse finds groups, such as bone and shell in addition to ceramics which might reflect Anglo-Saxon middening. The method does not disturb secure archaeological deposits and, once identified and recorded, material could be returned to a defined 10 x 10m collection unit. In addition, as with the Shapwick project, a time control of 10 minutes was used within each collection unit. The aim here was to reduce potential artefact recovery differences between field walkers of different experience (Aston and Gerrard, 1997). Located finds relating to production or other specialist activities, for example metalworking waste, previously recorded by the NHER were also plotted when present

In total 15 hectares (ha) of targeted fieldwalking was undertaken; 12 ha by the author (Congham 4 ha, Burnham 3 ha, Sedgeford 5 ha), and 3 ha of sherd-by-sherd surface collection by Andrew Rogerson at Wormegay (see Andrews 1992, 21). Field walking was carried out during March/April and September/October of 2007-2009. In general, optimum conditions for fieldwalking were obtained with ploughed and weathered fields. The fieldwalked areas at Congham were slightly obscured by early growth crop cover although, as Chapter 6 will demonstrate, this does not seem to have affected results significantly.

**Geophysical Survey**

The second survey technique employed at the case-study sites was geophysical survey, and specifically magnetometry survey with a fluxgate gradiometer. Since the 1990's, geophysical survey has become a standard part of archaeological evaluation

and field survey. Magnetometry was chosen for the purpose of this work as, in contrast to techniques such as electrical resistivity, it is a 'passive' form of archaeological prospection and therefore an excellent first tool for rapid evaluation of large areas (Gaffney and Gater, 2003; David et al, 2008). Magnetometry has not frequently been used to target early medieval landscapes but some very successful exceptions include the Heslerton environs project (Powlesland, 2003) and, of course, survey at the 'productive' site of Cottam (Richards, 2003), both in Yorkshire.

Magnetometer survey measures very small sub-surface changes in the Earth's magnetic field. Many human activities have the ability physically to alter the magnetic properties of the earth through heat or disturbance of the soil, for example, firing a kiln will affect the magnetic field in and around the kiln (Clark, 1996). Magnetic surveying can therefore usually detect ground-altering activities such as the digging of pits, ditches, hearths and kilns, thus indicating areas of occupation. However, magnetometry will also detect buried 'modern' items such as nails, agricultural equipment fragments, wire fences or any ferrous material. The geology of the site can also play an important role in the success of a magnetic survey. If the local geology is inherently magnetic then it may not be practicable or possible to undertake a magnetic survey. Similarly, buried services can have an adverse effect on the data (Gaffney and Gater, 2003).

The overall aim of the geophysical surveys at the case-study sites was to detect relict boundary features, or any other discrete features, that would compliment/contrast with observed fieldwalking and metal detector distributions, and allow for site extents and functional zones to be observed and interpreted. Furthermore, if changes to the layout of boundaries at the sites could be detected it might be possible to start to suggest the emergence of new forms of social relationship over time (Reynolds, 2003).

The specific survey technique employed was to mark out the survey area with a 20m x 20m grid aligned north–south, as any enhancements to the magnetic field caused by buried features are stronger the closer the traverse direction can get to a magnetic

north–south direction (Scollar, 1990). Data were then collected by making successive parallel traverses across each grid, as close to the magnetic north to south alignment as practicable. The survey was carried out using either a Bartington Grad601-2 Dual Fluxgate Gradiometer with an onboard automatic DL601 data logger (Sedgeford, Burnham, Congham South) or a Bartington FM36 Fluxgate gradiometer (Congham North, Rudham, Wormegay); both these instruments are highly stable magnetometers. The Fluxgate Gradiometer utilises two vertically aligned fluxgates, one positioned 1m above the other. With the Dual Fluxgate this arrangement is then duplicated and separated by a 1m cross bar, providing deeper anomaly detection capabilities and rapid assessment of the archaeological potential of the site. Collected data were automatically combined into one file and stored using onboard data loggers.

Following the survey, the collected data were analysed using ArchaeoSurveyor 2 (Sedgeford, Burnham, Congham South) or Geoplot 3 (Congham North, Rudham, Wormegay). The resulting data plot is presented with positive NT (nano-tesselae) mapped as black and negative NT mapped as white. The data are then corrected and processed using the following filters: De-spike, De-stripe (Zero Mean Traverse or ZMT) and De-stagger. The de-spike process removes spurious or extremely high intensity anomalies or datapoint values, often caused by ferrous objects, which may affect subsequent filter use, data enhancement and interpretation. The de-stripe process is used to equalise underlying differences between grids. Differences are most often caused by directional effects inherent to magnetic surveying instruments, instrument drift, instrument orientation (such as off-axis surveying or heading errors) and delays between surveying adjacent grids. The destripe process is used with care as it can sometimes have an adverse effect on linear features that run parallel to the orientation of the process. The de-stagger process compensates for data collection errors by the operator. Such errors can be caused by unsuitable or uneven surface conditions, such as a ploughed site or a very windy hillside, where the operator may start recording traverses too soon or too late. Plots of the data were then presented in processed linear greyscale (with ZMT and de-spiking applied and interpolated), in trace plot form and as a separate simplified graphic figures showing the main magnetic

anomalies detected, as is recommended in many specialised publications (David *et al*., 2008).

In total changing settlement morphologies were investigated by undertaking 22.5 hectares of geophysical survey (5 ha at Congham, 5 ha at Burnham, 5 ha at Sedgeford, 4.5 ha at Rudham and 3 ha at Wormegay). The geophysical surveys did not aim for blanket coverage, but instead targeted major boundary features around key finds/fieldwalking concentrations, and always attempted to investigate beyond at least one 'edge' of each site as judged from the artefact scatters.

**Plotting of Metal Detector finds**

The third technique of surface analysis employed at the case study sites, and one of paramount importance for the subsequent analysis of the 'productive' sites, was the two dimensional plotting of all located metal detector finds (metalwork and coinage) from the case-study sites. These data, once plotted, were then overlaid onto the fieldwalking and geophysical results.

The collating and plotting of metal detector finds from the case-study sites, although using artefactual material collected by other amateur detectorists (or, in the case of Sedgeford, research-project volunteers) had not previously been undertaken for any of the case-study sites. However, this method became a very useful way to elevate site interpretation. In particular, despite having no new fieldwork undertaken at them, the two case-study sites at West Walton and Bawsey now form satisfactory supplementary case-studies.

The specific methodology employed for plotting metal detector finds was as follows: where an eight figure OS grid reference had been provided for a metal find (sometimes a six figure grid reference), the findspot was plotted on the AutoCAD master file for the case-study site. Unfortunately, for a number of reasons associated with detecting strategies and reporting histories, not *all* metal finds from the case-study sites had been allocated detailed co-ordinates. In these circumstances

artefacts could not be plotted or incorporated into any subsequent graphical analysis, but *were* included in the text narrative of Chapters 5-11.

Ultimately, the dataset consisted of 506 unique plotted findspots of metalwork/coinage (with up to five artefacts from a single findspot) within the date range of 411-1066 AD. This comprised approximately 70% of total known metal finds within the date range of 411-1066 AD from the sites, and is therefore considered fairly representative of the total finds population, although resolution varied: for example, c. 85% of finds at Congham were located with eight figure grid references, while at Wormegay only c. 50% of finds were located. Metal finds dated to 1066–1150 AD, not included in the analysis, would have added a further 10 findspots.

The recorded findspots were used to map patterns within various metal finds groups and interpret intra-site patterns of finds loss. This involved dividing artefacts into the interpretative groups of Personal Metalwork, Functional Metal Object and Coinage, by standardised period (Pagan Saxon (450-650 AD), Middle Saxon (650-850 AD) and Late Saxon (850-1066 AD) as described above. Where a more accurate date was provided for an object (e.g. late Tenth century brooch) this was recorded on a number of EXCEL spreadsheets and if further analysis was possible (particularly with regard to coin dates) this is included in the narrative text of Chapters 5-11.

**Analysis of coin and metalwork finds**

Due to the specific and unique social, political and economic information that it can convey, coinage was treated as a separate artefact category during the spatial and graphical analysis of the metalwork assemblages.

As Chapter 3 demonstrated, if we accept that coin finds represent individuals engaged in some form of transaction, then fluctuations in the number of coins in circulation might indicate a number of modes of coin circulation, or even co-existing modes of circulation (Verhulst 2002, 87–8). On a regional basis, an explosion in coin loss in Norfolk from c. 680 AD might signify a transformation of coin use from socially embedded exchange (gift exchange or taxation) to a money economy (the Metcalf

model), while reduced quantities of coinage in circulation during the years immediately after 740 AD (accompanied by a reduction in continental coin and an increase in local minting) could signify a further transformation from a predominantly money economy back to socially embedded exchange (Naylor 2007, 59). Further transformations might be indicated by the vastly reduced amount of coinage in circulation during the period c. 760–870 AD, accompanied by new sources for the coin, such as Northumbria (the *styca* coinage) or Carolingian Europe. Between c. 870–930 AD coin use is largely restricted to Danelaw-minted issues prior to the emergence of the more abundant coinage of late Anglo-Saxon England. As Chapter 3 demonstrated, this is a time traditionally characterised by 'a status silver economy enjoyed by warrior leaders', but might equally be interpreted as a dual monetary/gift-exchange economy within the context of Scandinavian-controlled sea routes - which might account for the arrival of Arabic coinage in Norfolk (Metcalf 2007, 1–12).

Having identified these regional patterns (and suggested what they might represent) the extent to which the coinage 'signatures' from the case-study sites might differ from the Norfolk 'mean' (**Fig. 30**), and what this might mean in social terms, becomes an important research question. Does coin loss at the case-study sites confirm the coin-use boom of c. 680–740 AD, or do the sites feature variation to the basic model? Does coin loss cease between c. 760–870 AD and might this signal a transformed presence at the sites? Does a change in the source of coinage also indicate a deliberate choice of exchange contacts and therefore distinct site identities, and what might this say about the nature of controlling elites? To help answer these questions, coin graphs for each case-study site (West Walton) break down coin source into the following categories, as defined by the Fitzwilliam Museum's Online Coin Corpus: Arabic coin, Continental Coin and Other (including Anglo-Saxon coin), expanding upon date groups devised by Naylor (2007), from pre-680 AD through to 1050 AD.

Coin loss was also then analysed alongside proportions of other metalwork finds with new patterns visible. For example, the proportions of metalwork to coin loss

remains remarkably stable between the Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon periods at some sites but drops significantly at others. This drop might, on occasion, reflect the reduced quantities of coin/metalwork in national circulation during the Tenth century, but probably sometimes also reflects real transformations (Blackburn 2003, 20–36). At other sites, a small decrease in late Anglo-Saxon metalwork loss, accompanied by a small *increase* in coin loss occurs; perhaps indicating a strong presence of coin-using individuals. Finally, some sites have a high proportion of Early Anglo-Saxon metalwork finds (heavily biased towards personal metalwork indicative of ploughed-out cemeteries (Chester-Kadwell 2009, 74, figs 6.9 a/b) signifying the sites as important established nodes in the landscape prior to the Seventh century. These contrasting patterns of coin and metalwork, and their social significance will be fully considered in Chapters 5-11.

**Evaluation Exercise at Sedgeford**

Surface survey, whilst ideally demonstrating that important Anglo-Saxon transformations certainly occurred at the sites, might also demonstrate the frustrations associated with the limits of inference from stratigraphically insecure surface finds and geophysical survey, as noted by Boismier (1997, 236). In addition, evidence relating to specialist production (such as industrial waste) or animal exploitation patterns are extremely hard to date or phase from surface assemblages alone.

However, at Sedgeford, due to the ongoing research project, the opportunity arose to carry out trial-trench evaluation to supplement the superimposed survey data. This consisted of the excavation of five trenches, totalling 195 sq m, targeting identified anomalies. A full archive report is lodged with SHARP and the NHER (Davies forthcoming). My aspiration is that this research-led evaluation exercise, revealing as it does very good evidence for changes to both settlement morphology and material culture profiles over time, might provide a model for future integrated surveys at other early medieval rural sites. The full excavation methodology,

consistent with the method recommended by Norfolk Landscape Archaeology for site evaluation (Gurney, 2003), is detailed in Davies (forthcoming).

**Textual Perspectives**

Having presented the main methodological aspects pertaining to the collection and collation of field survey data for the case-study sites, the final important aspect of the West Norfolk case-study analysis was the incorporation of some historical analysis.

East Anglia is not blessed with abundant early documentary evidence and, as a result, we must concentrate on the archaeological evidence (Rogerson, 2005, 32). Nevertheless, following the end of the Anglo-Saxon period, a phenomenally important document, The Domesday Book (1086) and its unabridged smaller companion, the Little Domesday Book, records all of the newly acquired lands of William of Normandy and his followers in great detail (DB Morris (ed.), 1984). The creation of the Domesday Book was such an important event (for the purposes of taxation and such like) that its compilation is mentioned in the Anglo-Saxon chronicle for 1085 (Swanton, 2000, 216).

The tenurial detail recorded in Domesday Book has enabled a long tradition of scholarly research. Of importance for the following case-studies is the established practice of 'back-projecting' the detailed snapshot of Early Norman tenurial arrangement into earlier centuries (Pestell, 2003, 122). In particular, the system of land ownership pre-Domesday (TRE) is often listed in Domesday as well as distinctive features such as Anglo-Scandinavian personal names or loan words, for example the use of *carucates* denote Scandinavian naming, if not imposition, of land divisions (Hadley, 2006, 84-88). This type of information has enabled detailed works of synthesis to be constructed concerning, for example, Scandinavian tenurial influence in the area of the Danelaw (Hart, 1992). In Norfolk, it has been noted that the '...weak manorial structure and tenurial complexity...' recorded in Domesday paints a picture of an idiosyncratic and highly individual region (Williamson, 1993, 2). In

some cases this might be a result of complex early elite dynamics and transformations, some of them Scandinavian influenced (Hadley, 2006, 84).

However, as noted in Chapter 3, although textual evidence is very important, we must bear in mind that any document, even Domesday Book, is a product of the circumstances in which it was created. Documents are subject to their own particular biases (political for example) and therefore source criticism is as important as the probable facts contained in the text. This circumspect approach was adopted in the only previous historical consideration of the West Norfolk 'productive' sites (Pestell, 2003). Pestell noted that back projecting from Domesday Book provides 'no secure interpretation of the Middle Anglo-Saxon 'productive' sites' (2003, 122-137), however, it was still felt that certain pre-Domesday tenurial continuities (e.g. of ecclesiastical institutions) and topographic details could be highlighted to illustrate possible establishment of early settlements.

It is in the spirit of Pestell's (2003) appraisal of the 'productive' sites that the following case-studies incorporate a critical interpretation of the documentary evidence pertaining to them. In the main, this consists solely of a consideration of Domesday Book, although where other later primary documents have been used by secondary commentaries, for example, the *Liber Eliensis* or Fourteenth century ecclesiastical records (pipe rolls), these are also cited. The main edition of the Domesday Book used is the *Phillimore* edition (Morris (ed.), 1984), although the Penguin edition (Martin (ed.), 2003) was also consulted to see if wording or impression differed between translations. Clearly though, both these sources are effectively secondary sources and, as I was not in a position to translate from a primary document, caution is to be exercised over the final interpretative conclusions in Chapters 5-11.

## Conclusion

This chapter firstly introduced the rationale for detailed case-study investigation, and then gave reasons for case-study selection, introducing site search history and

topography. Next, the main investigative techniques to be employed were outlined. At a parish or landscape scale, *extensive polygon analysis* will provide an evaluation tool for identifying the extent of the sites, their overall complexity, and provide targets for more intensive survey. Intensive survey, based on 5 hectare samples of fieldwalking, geophysical survey and plotting of previous metal detector finds (3 hectares at Wormegay), will then aim to recover something of the diversity, complexity and changing lifestyles of the five main sites at Wormegay, Congham, Rudham, Burnham and Sedgeford. The two supplementary case-studies at Bawsey and West Walton collate previously collected data for the first time in order to attempt a similar narrative.

Throughout the following case-studies a systematic approach to describing full material profiles, including descriptions of metal finds and coinage, will be attempted by period (Early, Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon). It is also hoped that a consideration of Domesday Book will provide an interesting perspective on the later development of the sites, as well as providing certain insights into earlier tenurial complexities. Both these investigative techniques should allow for new perspectives.

The method of data presentation for Chapters 5-11 has already been outlined. The figures will be presented by period for the polygon analysis, as will the detailed plotting of metal detector finds. The detailed metal detector finds and fieldwalking results are then also overlaid onto the interpreted geophysical results. The interpolated raw geophysical results are also provided. For ease of reading, the figures are provided in a separate volume (Volume 2). The intensive case-study figures are **Fig. 70** to **Fig. 173**.

A final key point, building on the observations made in Chapters 1- 3, is that, for better observations to be made on 'productive' sites, more detailed work needs to be undertaken. It is only through a combined appraisal of various material culture datasets and settlement morphologies themselves that we will further develop detailed site histories. Thus, although the following case studies will at first appear as dense text, the detailed presentation and discussion of the site-specific data is

essential to enable the synthetic analyses explored in Chapter 12 and the conclusions drawn in Chapter 13.

# Chapter 5: Wormegay

## Extensive Polygon Analysis: Early Anglo-Saxon

**Fig. 70**

Overall, evidence for Early Anglo-Saxon activity in Wormegay parish is sparse. There is a Nineteenth century reference to two urns found somewhere in Wormegay Park (NHER 3451), and there is a possible pot-sherd (NHER 3452) recovered from higher land towards the western tip of Wormegay 'island', although this remains an uncertain identification (Silvester, 1988, 146). The only other find is an Early Saxon brooch, also from the western tip of Wormegay 'island' (NHER 25343).

At the Middle Anglo-Saxon site, centred on NHER 17286 (discussed below) , Early Anglo-Saxon activity is restricted to two Sixth century brooch fragments, a pot sherd (Rogerson, 2003, 119), a buckle and a hooked tag. Interestingly, the Early Anglo-Saxon pottery fragment is decorated with a stamped impression of an eel or wyrm (**Fig. 72**). The etymology of the place-name Wormegay is probably 'Wyrma's island' or, less likely, 'island of Wyrma's people', and is therefore an Old English personal name (CDEPN 701, DEPN 535, Mills, 2003, 511, PNNf). It has been speculatively suggested that the decoration on the pottery might represent an early expression of Wormegay's settlement identity as fossilised in the name '*wyrm*' (Rogerson, 2008, 433-434). Clearly this is a conjectural notion, but it is perhaps worth recalling ourselves, especially in the light of interpretations offered for the Middle Anglo Saxon settlement presence at Wormegay, of the later importance of fish and fisheries alluded to in documents pertaining to Anglo-Saxon monasteries (Hagen, 1995, 165-166). In this light, the attribution of an early personal name that relates to an important exploitable resource is not beyond possibility.

The present evidence implies only intermittent occupation of the fen-edge in the Wormegay environs during the Early Anglo-Saxon period. However, as with the case-study site at West Walton (Chapter 11), we must be slightly cautious in our use of negative evidence to indicate a general absence of human activity in the area, as some sites might be heavily masked by later silts (Silvester, 1985, 106-7). The recovery of the urns in the nineteenth century suggests an unlocated cemetery in the area, which would probably have related to an as yet unknown contemporary settlement. The 'sense of isolation' that was 'undoubtedly' a feature of the Wormegay environs (Silvester, 1988,143), might feasibly have created a special environment that was an important factor for locating some Early Anglo-Saxon cemeteries (Chester-Kadwell, 2009, 156). However, any real attempt to identify or interpret the Early Anglo-Saxon cemetery or settlement evidence in Wormegay must await future archaeological investigation.

## Extensive Polygon Analysis: Middle Anglo-Saxon

**Fig. 71**

Middle Anglo-Saxon activity in Wormegay parish is discrete rather than abundantly dispersed. The Fenland survey clearly demonstrated a clear Middle Anglo-Saxon presence on Wormegay 'island' (Silvester, 1988). The survey found Ipswich Ware pottery (and the occasional handmade sherd) over much of the south and west half of the island (NHER 24088, NHER 3460, NHER 19168, NHER 19167 and NHER 17286), although the density of surface scatters in most areas indicates cultivated land as opposed to a habitation focus *per se*. At the western extent of the island two Middle Anglo-Saxon copper alloy pins have been recovered, although this might represent people moving through the landscape as opposed to concentrated activity.

Away from Wormegay 'island' itself, Middle Anglo-Saxon activity is restricted to a single sherd of pottery identified during the Fenland survey at NHER 23630, and a single Ninth century strap end found towards West Briggs at NHER 25343. These

finds need not indicate any concentrated settlement activity. Silvester suggested that the single sherd of Ipswich Ware found at NHER 23630 might represent a deposit reworked during construction of the causeway (Silvester, unpublished HER notes). Additionally, the solitary strap end might relate to a stray loss on a routeway towards the fen edge.

Within NHER 17286 and parts of NHER 19168 (west), NHER 19167 (southeast) and NHER 3474, around the now isolated St. Michael's Church (where systematic surface collection is impossible), the Fenland survey observed the concentrated activity focus with which the discussion below is concerned. Subsequent detailed fieldwalking and metal detecting enabled NHER17286/19168 to be characterised as a 'productive' site (Rogerson, 2003, 119), but there has not been an opportunity to integrate the evidence from coinage, pottery and metalwork.

## Extensive Polygon Analysis: Late Anglo-Saxon

**Fig. 75**

Late Anglo-Saxon activity in Wormegay parish is somewhat reduced, compared to the Middle Anglo-Saxon evidence. Thetford Ware findspots are restricted to the probable crossing point at the western extent of Wormegay 'island' (NHER 24278). This area becomes an important focus following the Norman conquest, with the erection of a motte-and-bailey castle by Hermer de Ferrers 500m to the east (NHER 3544, see NHER 23632 on **Fig. 75**) (Silvester, 1988, 146).

Other Late Anglo-Saxon finds away from the main Middle Anglo-Saxon site are restricted to a Ninth century strap fitting from beyond the western extent of the 'island' (NHER 25343) and a stirrup on the western tip of the 'island' (NHER 23633). Both artefacts might be associated with movement across the landscape as opposed to permanent occupation.

The Fenland survey and later metal detecting have demonstrated some continued, albeit reduced, activity around the main Middle Anglo-Saxon focus, with concentrated activity focussed solely at NHER 17268. West of NHER 17268, finds are restricted to two Late Anglo-Saxon brooches representing the western extent of the main occupation zone in NHER 17268. East of NHER 17268, the Fenland Survey identified occasional Thetford Ware pottery, perhaps indicating some cultivation, but no intensive occupation.

## Intensive Fieldwalking Survey at NHER 17286/NHER 19168

**Fig. 73**

Following the identification of the concentrated activity focus at NHER 17286, a follow-up intensive fieldwalking survey was undertaken by Andrew Rogerson, although this has not been definitively published (see Andrews, 1992, 21). The survey technique consisted of collecting and plotting the location of each individual pot-sherd (sherd-by-sherd recording) and is therefore of a higher resolution than the intensive grid-based recording undertaken at Congham, Burnham and Sedgeford.

The survey of NHER 17286 (the aptly named *Big Men's Bones Field*) east and north of St. Michaels' Church seems to have defined the northern and eastern limits of the concentrated activity area, which covers a discrete area of 1.8 hectares. To the south, where NHER 17286 drops toward the fen edge, the artefact scatter may extend southwards, but unfortunately it was not possible to walk the adjoining field to the south. Additionally, the eastern and northern limits of the *walked* area were never recorded, although it is confirmed both the eastern and northern limits of the artefact scatter are real; for example, further northeast of the Ipswich Ware scatter, Roman pottery has been recovered, but no Anglo-Saxon material (Rogerson, pers comm.).

The track at the western extent of NHER 17286 appears to mark the real western extent of the concentrated Ipswich Ware surface scatter. NHER 19168, although walked at the time (and again by the author in 2008), is curiously free of pottery finds; although the subsequent geophysical survey and observation of cropmarks may explain this. The area around St. Michaels Church NHER 3474 was apparently free of sherds due to the uncultivated, wooded and built up nature of this part of the site. However, fieldwalking by the author (see below) did produce artefacts.

Unusually for a fieldwalking survey, surface finds of human bone were noted (Andrews, 1992, 21). Unpublished notes for NHER 19168 describe a 'disturbed burial', whilst further east in NHER 17286 a sherd-free area within the concentrated area of Ipswich Ware loss produced quantities of human remains (Rogerson, 2003, 119, and also observed by the author in 2007). The distribution of human bone is of added significance in the light of some of the metal surface finds (see below).

During the intensive fieldwalking a number of scatters of possible smelting slag were recorded to the west of St. Michaels Church (NHER 3460, 24088, 23633) (**Fig. 74**). These scatters are undated, as is the case with many surface scatters of production related waste, but a Roman date is thought most likely (Silvester, 1988, 145). This is further confirmed by examples picked-up by the author at NHER 17286, which are most likely to be Roman (De Rijk, pers comm.). However, until systematic work is undertaken, a Middle Saxon date for some of the Wormegay slag cannot be entirely ruled out. If a Middle Anglo-Saxon date were confirmed then this might suggest industrial production on a significant scale (Andrews, 1992, 21).

**Fieldwalking: Interpreting Middle Anglo-Saxon functional zones**

The results of the intensive fieldwalking were never interpreted in detail by Rogerson (see Andrews, 1992, 21). The incorporation of metal-detected data and the geophysical survey (see below) adds interpretative depth, but at this stage a few observations can already be made. Firstly, the crisp edge of the Ipswich Ware scatter

ending, as it does, at the northern and eastern extents of NHER17286 seems to indicate that this is no agricultural scatter, but genuine use-related ceramic loss. At this stage, whether this 'use' relates to a habitation focus or a site of contact/exchange is less certain. Secondly, within the overall scatter of surface pottery, the western area and a north-south band just west of the eastern extent of the artefact scatter are notable for a relative *absence* of pottery finds. This might indicate contrasting functional zones within the overall spread. The quantities of human remains perhaps indicate that this zone was a contemporary cemetery.

## Surface finds from metal detecting at NHER 17286 and NHER 19168

**Fig. 77**

To enable the extensive results of the fieldwalking to be further interpreted, located findspots of Middle Anglo-Saxon metalwork were plotted using the methodology described in Chapter 4. In general, activity represented by metal detector finds, in common with the pottery, is focussed north and east of the Church. However, the core area of finds loss appears to be centred on the southern half of NHER 17286 up to c.250m northeast of St Michael's church. North of this core zone of metalwork loss, Middle Anglo-Saxon metalwork finds are restricted to two findspots, both of copper alloy pins, located c.200m further to the north.

With the exception of the occasional Sixth century artefact (discussed above), the majority of metal finds are apparently Middle Anglo-Saxon in origin. Located artefacts include mainly personal metalwork ( 17 pins, a buckle, a strap end, a dress hook and a hooked tag) and occasional functional metal objects (two stylus fragments, not closely located, tweezers, and 7 coins of which 5 are closely located. In advance of geophysical survey, it might therefore be postulated that the distribution of metalwork denotes that the southern half of NHER 17286 was a settlement focus with a trade and exchange component.

When the pottery and metalwork distributions at NHER 17286 are compared an interesting observation can be made: metalwork is recovered from the pot-sherd free area (where human bone has also been recovered), towards the western extent of NHER 17286. It therefore appears that metal finds loss was not tightly bounded within the eastern and northern half of the site, as appears to be the case with the Ipswich Ware scatter. Accepting the potential for misleading distributions due to unknown human and natural processes, this pattern either indicates differential functional zones at the site, or, alternatively, chronological distinctions between the different material groups, now otherwise invisible.

**Material culture profile and Middle Anglo-Saxon settlement identity**

Despite uncertainties concerning the identification of functional zones at NHER 17286, the *combination* of functions represented by the lost metalwork implies a permanent settlement focus of some importance, with a literate population (styli) at times utilising both coinage and personal ornamentation, particularly dress accessories. Unfortunately, there is little additional evidence for production related activities (although slag was observed during fieldwalking). Thus, although the Ipswich Ware found at the site may represent another significant aspect of settlement identity, we must rely on the visible aspects of conspicuous consumption and coin use to interpret the Middle Anglo-Saxon site.

One important question that needs to be addressed is the apparent heavy weighting of the metalwork assemblage towards dress pins. A first reaction is to suggest that pins are more readily recovered during metal detecting, and that in fact this apparent bias is a product of uneven artefact recovery. However, the remaining metalwork assemblage seems to have been recovered in relatively even proportions (only one or two recorded examples of artefact categories such as brooch, buckle and strap-end). Furthermore, pins do not form such an abundant proportion of the metalwork assemblage at any of the other West Norfolk 'productive sites'. A possible

explanation for the preponderance of pins can be sought from the excavated evidence at Sedgeford.

At Sedgeford, a number of the excavated Eighth-Ninth century burials, although otherwise unaccompanied by grave goods, included a dress pin. These artefacts are interpreted as shroud pins, due to the position of pins on the torso of a burial and the tightly constrained arm position of the burials (Faulkner et al. 2001). This burial position was also noted at the Ninth to Twelfth century churchyard site at Raunds, N.Hants, although no shroud pins were recovered (Boddington, 1996, 48). In conclusion, on the further evidence of the surface scatter of human bone with which a number of the pins are associated, it seems a distinct possibility that the abundant pins at Wormegay reflect an aspect of Middle Anglo-Saxon burial practice disturbed by ploughing. This seems a more realistic interpretation than the pins being either reflective of a uniform dress fashion for the living population of Wormegay, or that pins were a dominant category of traded/exchanged artefact.

Given that the evidence cited above hints at a formal burial (perhaps even Churchyard style) then, as at Sedgeford, we must assess the significance of the presence of two stylus fragments for interpreting settlement identity. These objects are clearly indicative of literacy, but literacy of what nature? In short, although '...it would be dangerous to insist on a monastic role solely from these objects (Rogerson, 2003, 120)', Rogerson suggests that, '...the best interpretation of the...site at Wormegay, might be that it was monastic' (ibid, 121).

## Coinage profile

**Fig. 78**

We have seen already in Chapters 2/3 that potential ecclesiastical sites might also have been heavily involved in trade and exchange, as evidenced by coinage. To date, seven Middle Anglo-Saxon coins have been recovered from NHER 17286. This is a

somewhat lower total than the other West Norfolk 'productive' sites, although it is comparable with the partially excavated case-study site at Sedgeford. However, as metal detecting has been infrequent, this picture might be a reflection of poor artefact recovery rather than a real pattern and caution must therefore be exercised when attempting to use this evidence to interpret aspects of the Middle Anglo-Saxon settlement identity.

The coins from Wormegay consist of six *sceattas* (dated between 700-50) and a single denier of Louis the Pious (814-40). The *sceattas* are a mixture of Anglo-Saxon and Continental issues. The four Anglo-Saxon issues are single examples of Series J (possibly York mint) and R (East Anglian) and two Series B (one BII, North Thames). East coast links with Yorkshire are also in evidence at the other fen-edge sites at Bawsey and West Walton, while less obvious links to the Thames are in evidence at Sedgeford. The continental *sceattas* consist of a single Series D (700-710) coin, and a single Series E coin (700-750) minted in Frisia (Domburg) and Dorestad respectively (Ambramson, 2006, 10-11). The continental coins are also ubiquitous at the West Norfolk productive sites, as are the long-lived series R *sceattas* which are the latest coins of the 'abundant' phase of coin use. The cross section of coinage at Wormegay between 680 and 760, with both continental and Anglo-Saxon links, might be considered typical but perhaps not highly 'insular' as suggested by Rogerson (2003, 121).

Following the end of abundant coin loss, a single Ninth century coin find, a denier of Louis the Pious (814-40), has been recovered from the southern part of NHER 17268. The vastly reduced amount of coinage in circulation in Anglo-Saxon England during the period c.760-870, accompanied by new sources for the coin, might signal new 'trade and exchange identities' at sites characterised by socially embedded use of coinage (Chapter 3). The only continental coinage dating to the period c.760-870 from the West Norfolk 'productive' sites are a rare coin of Pepin III (issued 755-68) at Sedgeford, and Carolingian deniers of Louis the Pious at Wormegay and Burnham (issued 814-840 and 822-40 respectively). The Louis the Pious coinage, minted in Carolingian Frankia, may be the earliest coinage to arrive in Anglo-Saxon England via

Scandinavian controlled seaways. However, it has also been suggested that Carolingian coinage in the Danelaw reflects the continuation of pre-existing trade patterns and coin-use (Storey, 2003, 254-55). When these coins are found at sites, such as Wormegay, Scandinavian influence on the trajectory of a site must be considered; it is therefore interesting to note that the denier represents the latest coin loss at Wormegay. A change in the role of money by the Ninth century at Wormegay may indicate the emergence of new social identities.

## Late Anglo-Saxon NHER 17268/NHER 19168: Detailed Fieldwalking and Metal Detecting

**Fig. 77, Fig. 84**

The chronological range of lost artefacts seems to indicate that NHER 17268 continues as a concentrated Late Anglo-Saxon activity focus, perhaps a settlement, only until the later Ninth century. The latest dated finds recovered are a debased Borre style Anglo-Scandinavian brooch, and two fragments of a Viking gilt bronze oval (tortoise) brooch, considered by Rogerson be a possible pair (Rogerson, 2003, 120; **Fig. 79**). Other metal detector finds include both functional metal objects (two stirrups, a furniture fitting and an unidentified inscribed object), and personal metal ornamentation (two finger rings, a hooked tag, a dress hook, a strap end, tweezers).

As further corroboration of the late Ninth century terminus for occupation at NHER 17268, the 'handful' (Silvester, 1988) of Thetford Ware sherds recovered by the Fenland survey is considered '...insufficient to indicate occupation continuing into the tenth century' (Rogerson, 2003). In addition, the intensive fieldwalking did not recover any Thetford Ware (Andrews, 1992, 21). However, three Thetford Ware sherds were recovered by the author in rough ground immediately to the southeast of the Churchyard, perhaps reflecting some Late Anglo-Saxon activity near the church.

The small quantity of Thetford Ware is not enough to establish any impression of Late Anglo-Saxon functional zonation. However, some further insight into settlement character may be gained from the metal artefactual material. Firstly, all located metalwork occurs within a relatively tight spatial group towards the south west of NHER 17268 and the east of NHER 19168. Secondly, the oval brooch fragments are located in the dispersed area of ploughed-out human bone, which is free of Ipswich Ware. Hoggett considers this bone represents a Middle Anglo-Saxon cemetery within the settlement (Hoggett, Unpublished, 202). In advance of geophysical survey, it was uncertain if this apparent spatial patterning implied that the Ipswich Ware scatter and the human bone were contemporary. Indeed, as Rogerson has tentatively suggested that the associated bone and oval brooch(es) indicates a disturbed Scandinavian burial (Rogerson, 2003, 120), and Ipswich Ware use is considered to end c.850 (Blinkhorn, pers comm.), the two signatures cannot certainly be considered contemporaneous.

No late Anglo-Saxon coinage has been recovered from Wormegay. However, the presence of an undated gold ingot, an artefact class considered by Pestell to represent Scandinavian activity, perhaps indicates some continuance of exchange or specialist production (Pestell, 2005, 37).

So, although later archaeological evidence at NHER 17268 is greatly reduced, there is enough data to perhaps suggest some continued presence in the Ninth century. In particular, the absence of coinage, abundant pottery, and styli suggests a cessation or transformation of important trade and exchange related activities, and perhaps also site status. The presence of an undated gold ingot reminds us that even though the role of money may have been transformed, it does not necessarily mean that all exchange related activities ceased. The presence of a possible Scandinavian burial also hints at an interesting final phase of activity.

## Cropmark evidence and Geophysical survey at NHER 19168 and NHER 17286

### Cropmarks

**Fig. 77**

To further enhance the interpretation of the site, an appraisal of relevant air-photographic evidence (including data collated by the Norfolk National Mapping Programme and web-based images, Maps Live and Google Maps) was undertaken. Wormegay was the sole case-study site where this method allowed additional features to be identified.

Three north-south aligned linear features were noted as parch-marks c.100m west of the eastern extent of NHER 19168, running over an average north to south distance of c. 90m. Each had an approximate width of 3m, and they seemed to curve on a common alignment slightly towards the east at their northern end. The features seem to represent boundary ditches; probably the main western boundary ditches of the Middle-Late Anglo Saxon settlement. Their common alignment suggests either the presence of a tri-vallate enclosure, or the periodic reinstatement of a key boundary feature.

Beyond the northern extent of the three north-south anomalies two further cropmarks were identified, running broadly on an east-west alignment into NHER 17286 for observed lengths of c. 20m (western feature) and c. 40m(eastern feature). If these features relate to the north-south aligned features, a potential northern side of a large sub-square, measuring a maximum of c.200 square metres, is implied. Extrapolating this potential morphology southwards places the now isolated St. Michaels church in the south-west corner of an enclosure, perhaps implying either contemporaneous layout or later churchyard layout respecting earlier boundaries.

**Geophysical survey**

**Figs. 80-84**

The geophysical survey covered a contiguous area totalling 3 hectares (2 hectares in NHER 17286 and 1 hectare in NHER 19168) and was carried out using the methodology outlined in Chapter 4. To enhance the interpretation of the Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon site, the survey aimed to identify the location of boundary features and relate these to the previously observed cropmarks and surface artefact finds.

The survey produced highly contrasting magnetic responses (+6.4 NT to -6.4 NT (NHER 17286) and +8.21 to -8.20 NT (NHER 19168)) that can partially be attributed to the large quantities of undated metal slag present in the ploughsoil (**Fig. 80**). This backdrop of ferrous 'spikes' makes the interpretation of the observed anomalies somewhat difficult. A further complicating factor was the presence of anomalies relating to later agricultural practices; including east-west aligned modern plough scars and north-south aligned probable furrows. The furrows were regularly spaced, running from the high land towards the southern slope of Wormegay 'island', and are tentatively attributed to the post medieval period, as they appeared to cut through further identified anomalies (**Fig. 81**). In addition, a pennanular enclosure (15m in diameter), with two parallel east-west aligned negative anomalies contained within it, was identified as a positive anomaly in the southern part of NHER 19168 (**7**). The function and date of this feature is uncertain but this area is currently reserved for game keeping and this anomaly might represent a modern bird-feeding or decoy structure.

A number of anomalies were observed which seem to relate to the Anglo-Saxon occupation (**Fig. 82**), although a firm interpretation of these features must await future excavation. At the western end of the surveyed area, NHER 19168, three roughly north-south aligned anomalies were identified (**1**). The features, an average of 4m in width, were observed running over a north-south distance of c.100m and curved eastward at their northern end. Although they were harder to observe at the southern extremity of NHER 19168, these positive anomalies are best interpreted as

ditches infilled with magnetically responsive material, and seem to confirm the identification of the cropmark features thought to represent the main settlement boundaries. If this is the case, the land to the east of these boundaries lies within the main Anglo-Saxon settlement. If we can accept this, then the absence of Ipswich Ware within NHER 19168 indicates a real contrast of finds loss within the main settlement areas in comparison to the dense areas of Ipswich Ware loss in NHER 17286, perhaps indicating different functioning zones.

Moving westwards, a positive (but relatively weak) linear anomaly (**2**) was observed towards the northern end of NHER 17286, running over an ESE-WNW distance of c.53m. This feature then appears to turn roughly ninety degrees to the SSE (possibly with a break in the corner angle), before running in a NNW-SSE direction for c. 46m. The morphology of this feature suggests that it could represent the northern and eastern sides of the large boundary sequence observed in NHER 19168 (**1**). Interestingly, the NNW-SSE aligned anomaly that, taken with (**1**), would represent the eastern side of a sub-rectangular enclosure seems to frame a moderate area of Ipswich Ware loss, as identified by the intensive fieldwalking survey. This may suggests that the boundaries and Ipswich Ware scatter are contemporary, and that activities resulting in Ipswich Ware loss were bounded by this feature. The NNW-SSE anomaly also appears to be truncated by a series of sub-circular features (**8**) (see below), which may be later.

Approximately 12m east of the NNW-SSE arm of possible boundary feature (**2**), a major NNW-SSE aligned feature, another potential boundary, is represented by a weak positive anomaly (**3**). This feature is c.3m wide, observed over a length of c. 175m and may represent a major boundary ditch along the eastern side of a sub-rectangular settlement enclosure. Approximately 61m SSE of the northern extent this feature, a significant break was observed (c.15m in width), which might represent an entrance. At its SSW end this boundary turns roughly ninety degrees to the WSW to form the southern arm of an enclosure, although this is far from clear, perhaps due to overlying colluvium masking anomalies at the southern (downhill) side of the surveyed area. Boundary (**3**) frames the eastern extent of concentrated

Ipswich Ware loss, indicating a Middle Anglo-Saxon date. A small amount of Ipswich Ware beyond the eastern limit of boundary (**3**) may tentatively indicate cultivation on the eastern periphery of the main occupation zone. It is uncertain if features (**2**) and (**3**) are contemporaneous.

Towards the southern half of the surveyed area in NHER 17286, a series of smaller, but relatively strong, positive anomalies were observed (**4**), apparently abutting NNE - SSW boundary (**2**). These features are best interpreted as rectilinear enclosure boundaries, perhaps indicative of internal space divisions or plot boundaries within the main sub-rectangular unit ((**1**), (**2**), (**3**)). These boundaries probably indicate a habitation zone and correspond closely with the core areas of Middle Anglo Saxon artefact loss. The way in which these features 'frame' the areas of extremely intense Ipswich Ware loss indicates that activities resulting in Ipswich Ware loss - domestic occupation - was bounded by these features, confirming beyond doubt that the site at Wormegay was a permanent settlement during the Middle Anglo-Saxon period (**Fig. 83**). Interestingly, the sub-square enclosure and annex abutting boundary (**3**), frame an area of so much Ipswich Ware loss that one can speculate that this was either a zone of primary exchange involving Ipswich Ware (perhaps even a contact zone between different groups utilising Ipswich Ware), or alternatively (in the light of possible oven-like anomalies (**9**), see below) a production zone involving Ipswich Ware containers. In addition, the western extent of these internal enclosure boundaries (**4**) coincides strikingly with the western side of the zone of intense Ipswich Ware loss; beyond this area there is very little Ipswich Ware, but human bone is present. This pattern seems to indicate that the internal boundaries (**4**) also defined further Middle Anglo Saxon functional zones, with the western absence of ceramic discard indicating the presence of a contemporary burial ground.

A further weak set of positive intermittent anomalies were identified running over a length of c.180m, on a NE to SW alignment from the southern edge of the surveyed area in NHER 19168, north eastwards towards the eastern edge of the surveyed area in NHER 17286 (**5**). Unfortunately, due to the observed later plough furrows, this feature could not be accurately traced towards the eastern half of the surveyed area

and its relationship with the proposed Middle Anglo-Saxon rectilinear boundary features ((**2**)/ (**3**)) cannot be ascertained. However, it is worth postulating that the spacing (c.6m) between the parallel anomalies (**5**) is reminiscent of more obvious droveway type anomalies identified at the case-study sites at Congham and Sedgeford. In the light of this possible interpretation, it is also worth noting that the alignment of (**5**) is consistent with the possible route-way of Roman date across the fens postulated by Smallwood (2006, 10-11). If accepted, this would have been an important pre-existing landscape feature, and might have influenced the location of the later Anglo-Saxon settlement.

Apart from the large number of features that may be ascribed to a broadly planned 'rectilinear' phase of boundary-use, perhaps the most significant features to be identified by geophysical survey were a number of discrete sub-circular boundaries indicating the presence of a distinctly different phase of land-use. These sub-circular boundaries (**6**)/(**8**) all appear to post-date the rectilinear features (**Fig. 84**). Being cautious, however, although these features are discrete positive anomalies, no firm conclusions can be offered in advance of trial excavation.

Towards the southern half of NHER 17286, a strong positive anomaly was identified which seemed to represent the main enclosure of the apparently later sub-circular phase (**6**). Anomalous ferrous 'spikes' along its length might indicate iron slag within the fill of this ditch (although this does not itself prove a later date for the feature). The feature appeared to truncate the rectilinear features interpreted as internal boundary divisions (**4**). The sub-circular feature ran beyond the western edge of NHER 17286 and, although it may continue to run west into NHER 19168 (before running towards the church), the anomaly is very weak. Similarly, at its southern end, although the feature might continue, the likely presence of overlying colluvial deposits might mask the anomaly. The sub-circular enclosure ditch (**6**) appears to be roughly 3m in width, and has a projected diameter of c. 80m, covering the Ipswich Ware free area towards the Church. This enclosure morphology is paralleled by a number of Middle-Late Anglo Saxon enclosures, for example Higham Ferrers (Hardy et al, 2007, 31), Goltho, Lincolnshire (Beresford, 1987) or Bramford, Suffolk

(Reynolds, 1999, 144) and provides an interesting context for the Late Anglo Saxon (later Ninth century) artefacts discussed above.

In addition to the main sub-circular enclosure, a number of other small parts of sub-circular enclosures were identified as weak positive anomalies in both NHER 17286 and 19168 (**8**). These features may represent further small agricultural or stock-keeping enclosures subsidiary to the main enclosure (**4**). Unfortunately not enough was observed of their morphology to say anything other than that they may belong to the same Mid-Late Ninth century activity phase as the enclosure (**6**).

Finally, the geophysical survey identified two groups of discrete anomalies (**9**) inside the northern edge of the area of intense rectilinear plot boundaries (**4**) in NHER 17286. The most prominent of these anomalies were located in the area of intense Ipswich Ware loss beyond the corner of one of the rectilinear enclosures (**4**). These features consist of a central oval core (max. 5m N-S) with a highly positive magnetic response, surrounded by a negative halo effect. Although the interpretation of these anomalies is uncertain in the absence of trial excavation, features of this morphology are often interpreted as buried kilns or ovens and, at Sedgeford, this has been demonstrated by excavation (Davies, forthcoming, Bates 1991). The presence of some kind of Middle Anglo-Saxon informal or formal industry/production would provide one context for the intense Ipswich Ware discard that we can see in this particular zone of the site.

## Late Anglo-Saxon and Medieval historical and archaeological background

As with almost all Norfolk settlements, Wormegay first appears in documents at Domesday (1086). The main entry details a manor of one carucate and one church held before Domesday (TRE) by Thorketel, with resources of 3 cows, 18 pigs, 60 sheep, 4 beehives and, significantly, 3 fisheries and ¼ of a mill (DB 1984, 13.4). By

1086 (TRW), Wormegay was granted to Hermer de Ferrers, although 2 freemen are also listed (DB 1984, 66.3).

Despite the 'productive' site at Wormegay now being the site of the unspectacular and isolated Church of St Michael (Pestell, 2003, 129), since Hermer de Ferrers replaces a probable manorial caput owned by Thorketel, Liddiard has argued for a pre-Conquest estate centre of some importance (Liddiard, 2000, 31-3). The later hamlet of West Briggs is also listed as being held by Thorketel before Domesday, and later by De Ferrers (DB 1984, 13.5). West Briggs seems to be a substantial settlement of 2 carcuates with resources similar to Wormegay, but includes woodland and a mill, and interestingly no fisheries (*ibid*). A further three freemen are listed at West Briggs (DB 1984, 66.4). The importance of West Briggs by the time of Domesday Book (1086) might perhaps indicate that activity had already shifted away from the site of St. Michael's church.

Progressing to later medieval times (**Fig. 76**), a number of important sites and monuments become visible in the Wormegay environs. Even so, although there is extensive medieval surface evidence, most surface finds seem to represent ploughed out pottery scatters, associated with the cultivation of agricultural land (e.g. NHER 3443, 3460), and it is clear that concentrated activity has shifted west, away from the main Anglo-Saxon activity focus. Personal metalwork is now only lost at the western end of Wormegay 'island' (e.g. NHER 3459) and beyond. The present day Park Farm on Wormegay 'island' seems to indicate the medieval function of this area, as do cropmarks indicative of medieval field boundaries on the south side of the 'island' (NHER 3460). A now quarried-away earthwork site (NHER 3457) at the eastern tip of the 'island' is considered to represent a medieval park lodge by Silvester (1988, 148), although it may also be the location of the post-medieval manorial centre succeeding Wormegay Castle (Bryant, 1904, 345).

The main reason for the later settlement shift beyond the west of Wormegay 'island' was the erection of a motte-and-bailey castle (NHER 3544/23632) (which later passed to the Bardolph family), by Hermer de Ferrers following the Norman

conquest (Silvester, 1988, 146). This site controls the channel, possibly culverted in Norman times, separating Wormegay 'island' from the higher land to the west. The motte and bailey appears to have been thrown up on top of an existing track, as there is a sudden change in the alignment of the main village street at the motte (*ibid*). The medieval village appears to have agglomerated around this new elite focus, as a series of curving field dykes are considered to denote medieval landholdings (*ibid*). Under the Bardolf family Wormegay received a grant for a weekly fair in 1244 (Cal. Charter Rolls, 1903, 280).

A number of other medieval sites are evident in Wormegay parish as cropmark and earthwork sites. Most notable are those relating to the remains of Wormegay Priory (NHER 3456). Wormegay Priory was founded in the later Twelfth century on a smaller 'island' northwest of the main 'island' which houses the Anglo-Saxon site. The site of the priory contains a large trapezoidal earthwork and possible fish 'stews' (ponds) (Silvester, 1988, 148). By the Fifteenth century, Wormegay priory had declined in importance and became a cell of Pentney priory (ibid.).

Pestell has noted that there are a number of ecclesiastical institutions visible on the peat edge surrounding the earlier 'productive' site: to the north, Wormegay Priory and Blackbrourough Priory, and to the south and east Pentney Priory, Shouldham Priory and Marham Abbey (Pestell, 2004, 54, Fig. 14). This circle of ecclesiastical sites might tentatively be interpreted as indicating the gradual break-up and encroachment upon a now defunct site of earlier importance. However, the question remains as to whether they indicate that the earlier estate was also an ecclesiastical holding. Unfortunately, there is no hard evidence for this (Pestell, 2003, 136). However, it is suggested that the absence of a number of religious sites in Domesday Book might be due to the secularisation of land by the West Saxon Kings in the wake of the First Viking Age (Dumville, 1992, Pestell, 2003, 136), and this must be considered a possibility for Wormegay.

The importance of the resources of Wormegay Park in the medieval period is also of interest. Although the exact location of the estate is uncertain, Fourteenth century

documentation indicates the presence of: a wood; a heronry; a rabbit warren; two fisheries; a ruined watermill and a turbary (an area for peat cutting) (Silvester, 1988, 148). Nationally, documentary evidence for medieval fishing rights suggests that fish production was a very important activity at 'monastic' sites (Aston, 2002, 24), something further emphasised by the possible presence of fish ponds at Wormegay priory by the Twelfth century (NHER 3456). This may be a tentative clue to one potential aspect of earlier settlement identity? Caution must be exercised as, for example, the wholesale exploitation of herons and the creation of fish ponds/stews in general have been placed as late as the Eleventh century by Sykes (2004, 95); somewhat later than the potential final phase of occupation at NHER 17286 (later Ninth century). Furthermore, Sykes suggest that, although herons were certainly consumed by the upper echelons of Norman society, both ecclesiastical and secular elites were engaged in this practice (Sykes, 2007, 64). Clearly then, using later documentary evidence to make observations concerning the identity of the earlier settlement remains at Wormegay is highly speculative.

Even though Wormegay was clearly of reduced importance by the time of Domesday Book, it still contained fisheries and beehives (providing an important component of mead, a drink associated with the elite (Hagan, 2002, 150)). If we allow ourselves to back-project the diversity of exploited resources listed in the Fourteenth century into Anglo-Saxon times, we can perhaps begin to imagine the economic base of production for the Middle Anglo-Saxon site. For example, intensive fish production would certainly have fully exploited the various environmental niches around Wormegay 'island'.

# Chapter 6: Congham (with Grimston)

## Congham Extensive Polygon Analysis: Early Anglo-Saxon

**Fig. 85, Fig. 86**

Surface finds indicate that Congham was an important and extensive Early Anglo-Saxon activity focus. Material from this period is located in all of the large surface spreads found over a north to south strip 1km in length. The coverage of metal detecting and ad hoc fieldwalking at Congham is excellent, and has been carried out since 1993 with a consistent method, by Mr. J. and Mrs. P. Wells, who recorded artefact locations in detail (Rogerson, 2003, 121). As a result, the edges of many artefact scatters can be regarded as real boundaries (e.g. NHER 11743), and the southern and eastern boundaries of the 'site' have therefore been reasonably well defined. The western and northern edges of this site, presumably bounded by a stream to the north and the fen edge to the west, were unknown before detailed survey work.

Accepting caveats as to how 'real' the observed distributions may be, the extensive polygon analysis suggests that the main occupation areas at Congham remain remarkably stable from the Early Anglo-Saxon period onwards. There is certainly no obvious 'Mucking-style' settlement shift as identified by Hamerow (1993). Instead, the real interest is in whether it is possible to identify functional zones within the overall artefact scatter, and Congham is one of only a handful of sites where distinct areas of Early Anglo-Saxon cemetery and settlement activity might be postulated from surface finds alone

On higher land to the east of the overall focus, and east of a putative Roman villa (NHER 3560), artefact scatters are heavily weighted to personal metalwork,

particularly brooches, and seem to indicate ploughed-out inhumation cemeteries (NHER 11633, NHER 20975 and NHER 30652). Additional pottery findspots in this area (NHER 30690) may relate to cremation burials and not necessarily to buried settlement. A core area for burial activity can be postulated, at NHER 3565/ 30690/30754.

To the west and north of this core cemetery spread, however, the lost non-ferrous metalwork also includes occasional functional metal objects, such as a Sixth century Merovingian gold *tremiss* coin minted in the Netherlands (NHER 11743) and a *tremiss* of Goademar II of Burgundy (524-32) (NHER 25765). Whilst these objects might also originate from a cemetery context, the further evidence of discrete Early Anglo-Saxon pottery scatters adjacent to the putative villa (NHER 3566) make it possible to speculate that the western half of NHER25765 may also include buried settlement evidence, albeit of an uncertain character. At the same time there *is* certainly a very rich cemetery, with weapon burials, contained within NHER 25765. Attempting to distinguish Early Anglo-Saxon cemetery and settlement surface signatures is something that the detailed survey work specifically targeted (see below).

## Congham Extensive Polygon Analysis: Middle Anglo Saxon

**Fig. 85, Fig. 87**

Middle Anglo-Saxon artefact loss in Congham corresponds quite closely with the areas of Early Anglo-Saxon material, although findspots are more abundant in both quantity and the range of functions they represent. At this date, for the first time, it is possible to identify extensive areas of settlement-related activity, with chronologically diagnostic pottery and metalwork scatters as far north as NHER 3560 and as far south as NHER 30690.

The overall pattern of artefact loss suggests that there is potential for recognising contrasting activity foci, if not functional zones. In particular, there is a degree of separation between a north-western focus with a varied surface signature (NSMR 25765, hereafter Congham North), and a further focus to the south (NSMR 3565/11743, Congham South). Between the two foci there are occasional finds of personal metalwork and a single coin, but no functional objects nor, significantly, pottery. This apparent Northwest/ Southeast division between occupation foci echoes the pattern hinted at by the Early Anglo-Saxon evidence, but is more definite.

The two identified Middle Anglo-Saxon occupation foci appear to have contrasting surface signatures. Firstly, Congham North (NHER 25765), previously labelled as the 'productive' site (Rogerson, 2003, 115), is characterised by abundant metalwork loss, which, although not of particularly exceptional quality, includes both functional objects (knives, a spoon and coinage), and personal metalwork (buckles and pins). Two thirds of the Congham Middle Anglo-Saxon coins are also recovered from here (see below). However, findspots of Ipswich Ware meant that evidence for a permanent settlement focus on this site could not be ruled out. Because this question needed to be addressed, this field, and the one immediately to the west (with no finds apparent), were selected as targets for detailed fieldwalking and geophysical survey.

Secondly, Congham South (NHER 11743/3565) has an exceptionally varied surface signature, including functional objects (a coin, stylus and an architectural fragment) personal metalwork (pins and brooches) and pottery. In addition, a small unpublished excavation by Keith Wade (1970) recovered a clay floor, post-holes and unstratified animal bones relating to a Middle Anglo-Saxon building, confirming a habitation focus perhaps centred on NHER 3565. In contrast, east of NHER 3565, occasional pottery but no metalwork has been recovered (NHER 30690) perhaps indicating an artefact scatter relating to agricultural cultivation. As both fields have been metal detected by the same individuals the surface signatures can be considered directly comparable, and it is possible that the eastern extent of the Congham South settlement focus has been successfully defined, or instead that we

are observing a contrasting zone of occupation within this settlement focus. The landowners were not prepared to allow further investigation of this area during the course of this research but, fortunately, geophysical survey in NHER 11743 was possible.

## Congham Extensive Polygon Analysis: Late Anglo-Saxon

**Fig. 85, Fig. 88**

Late Anglo-Saxon period surface finds, particularly pottery scatters (Thetford Ware), are more extensive than those from preceding periods. However, there is no indication that the core settlement area has shifted, land-use has simply expanded as, for instance, at Witton (Lawson, 1983). In addition, although a wider range of functions are represented by lost metalwork; polygon analysis indicates no major changes to the existing functioning zones of the Middle Anglo-Saxon period. At Congham North (NHER 25765), for example, a range of functional metalwork (e.g. a knife and balances), personal metalwork (a brooch, tweezers), coinage and pottery is still to be found; possibly indicating permanent settlement with a trade/exchange element.

At Congham South (NHER 11743/3565) the Middle Anglo-Saxon activity focus and varied surface signature is sustained into the Late Anglo-Saxon period. Artefacts, in addition to pottery, include both functional metalwork (stylus, harness fitting), personal metalwork (pin) and more abundant coinage. Most noticeably, NHER 11743, a field peripheral to the activity focus previously seen at NHER 3565, is transformed in this period into a core area of Late Anglo-Saxon finds loss, including a possible ploughed-out coin hoard (see below). An ecclesiastical presence also emerges in the form of the probable site of All Saints Church (possibly at NHER 3562), which certainly had burials around it (NAU, 1999). The development of Late Anglo-Saxon Congham South and how it might relate to the overall settlement sprawl is clearly an important research question, and NHER 11743 was therefore

targeted for intensive geophysical survey and plotting of metal finds, Unfortunately the agricultural regime did not permit additional fieldwalking.

Intriguingly, Late Anglo-Saxon production related activities are indicated at both activity foci (particularly Congham North). At Congham South, production or trade/exchange in raw materials is indicated by the presence of a copper alloy ingot (NHER 3562). At Congham North, unpublished amateur excavations provide good evidence for pottery production at the western side of the overall settlement spread (NHER 3569). Excavations recovered four pot wasters, kiln furniture and two undated ditches containing evidence for the presence of high temperature industrial process (Rogerson, pers comm.). The pottery being produced appears to have been Grimston-Thetford Ware, a local variation of the Thetford-type ware, produced between the Tenth and Eleventh centuries, and a very small amount of medieval unglazed wares (Eleventh-Thirteenth centuries) (Rogerson, pers comm.). Undated surface scatters of metal working debris have also been recovered at Congham North (NHER 25765, NHER 3569). This material could be Roman, although the material from NHER 3569 appears to be bloomery slag, which would indicate a medieval date (Dennis, pers comm.).

There is continued and sustained occupation throughout the Congham area into the Anglo-Norman period (**Fig. 89**). It is likely that the present village structure, strung out south of St. Andrews church (near NHER 15502), was fossilised at this time. However, it is interesting that the main Anglo-Saxon activity foci at NHER 25765 and NHER 11743/3565 do not develop into later settlement areas. Diagnostic material dateable to the period between 1066 and 1150 from these fields is restricted to unglazed medieval pottery and four coins (three of Henry I and one of William I), although settlement earthworks have been identified at NHER 11743 and NHER 16778 (not depicted).

## Grimston Extensive Polygon Analysis: Early Anglo Saxon

**Fig. 85, Fig. 90, Fig. 91**

Grimston provides a useful comparative case-study to Congham, a kilometre to the south, as there has also been extensive metal detecting, fieldwalking and excavations here. However, as much of the Anglo-Saxon evidence has been recovered from what are now built up areas, the spatial boundaries of certain activity foci are obscured.

Early Anglo-Saxon activity is restricted to a stray find of a glass vessel (NHER 2337) and a cemetery focus in the present built-up area to the north (NHER 3573). This seems much more discrete than at Congham although, in common with Congham, activity is also located around the site of a Roman villa (NHER 3579). Here, surface finds include personal metalwork (brooches and a girdle hanger) possibly indicative of an inhumation cemetery. Early Saxon handmade pottery, indicative of either settlement or cemetery, has also been recovered from fields immediately to the north and south of the villa (NHER 19965, NHER 29404, NHER 30967).

## Grimston Extensive Polygon Analysis: Middle Anglo Saxon

**Fig. 85, Fig. 90, Fig. 91**

Although the presence of an Early Anglo-Saxon settlement focus in Grimston is uncertain, by the Middle Anglo-Saxon period there appears to be a discrete settlement focus centred on NHER 3579. Ipswich Ware pottery has been recovered from four adjacent fields (NHER 3579, 30967, 29404 and 19965), and the Middle Anglo-Saxon findspots are certainly more concentrated than the dispersed Early Anglo-Saxon material. Thus, although there is no obvious spatial shift of activity during the Seventh century, a functional shift from cemetery to settlement related signature might be postulated.

Middle Anglo-Saxon metal artefacts at Grimston are mostly restricted to NHER 3579 and 29404. Although a number of functions are represented (styli, coinage and brooches) the quantities of metalwork are noticeably smaller than at Congham. Coinage is restricted to an East Anglian series R sceatta (700-750), and two Continental Series E sceattas dating to the first quarter of the Eighth century. On present evidence, it is tempting to suggest that NHER 3579 and 29404 represent the Middle Anglo-Saxon settlement focus, with NHER 30967 and 19965 as associated cultivated land.

Further Middle Anglo-Saxon activity of an uncertain nature is indicated by residual Ipswich Ware sherds from 23 The Grove, Pott Row (NHER 29544), and a single pin from NHER 3602.

## Grimston Extensive Polygon Analysis: Late Anglo Saxon

**Fig. 85, Fig. 90, Fig. 91**

During the Late Anglo-Saxon period Grimston is transformed into an extensive rural settlement focus, dispersed from the previous Middle Anglo-Saxon core, evidenced by abundant surface finds of Thetford Ware pottery. The phenomenon of Late Anglo-Saxon rural settlement expansion has been noted at many sites in Norfolk, and has sometimes been interpreted as a result of the specialisation of production (Williamson, 1993, 73-104). This certainly seems to be the case at Grimston, where the emergence of a *de novo* activity focus at Pott Row can, following a number of excavations, be related directly to the emergence of a pottery industry here (Leah, 1994).

The earliest activity relating to the pottery industry at Grimston dates to the Eleventh and early Twelfth centuries and is located in between Grimston and Pott Row (NHER 11789), where a kiln and pits were excavated (Leah, 1994). Settlement appears to have developed along an east-west aligned strip north of here, as

indicated by numerous Late Anglo-Saxon metal finds (e.g. NHER 11790 and NHER 3599) evidencing a variety of functions, such as, iron knives, strap fittings, bridle bits and a finger ring. To the west, within the hamlet of Pott Row proper, excavated settlement evidence includes a Late Anglo-Saxon ditch and post hole structure, indicating both intensive land-use and the organisation of bounded space within this part of the Late Saxon settlement (Leah, 1994, Fig. 30). Similarly at Vong Lane (NHER 24054) Late Anglo-Saxon buildings, pottery kilns and production waste have been excavated. All of the areas involved in pottery production continue to be occupied into the Twelfth, Thirteenth and even Fourteenth centuries, when Grimston was producing vast quantities of pottery.

In addition to the emergent Late Anglo-Saxon settlement zones at Grimston West and Pott Row, there is also sustained Late Anglo-Saxon activity at the older settlement focus to the east (NHER 3579). Surface finds include pottery (NSMR 3579, 30967, 29404 and 19965) and diverse metalwork scatters (NHER 3579 and NHER 29404). Personal ornamentation includes a cosmetic set, strap fittings and a buckle, whilst functional metal objects include two English coins, a sword, a harness, a knife and a stirrup (NHER 3579). Interestingly, personal metalwork is largely absent from NHER 29404 (restricted to a strap fitting), but functional objects, including a single English coin, two harnesses and the aforementioned Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon stylus, are abundant. The finds located here indicate the presence of a discrete settlement focus with differentiated functional zones engaged in a variety of activities including limited trade and exchange.

## Material culture profile and settlement morphology, integrated Fieldwork at Congham North (NHER 25765), and Congham South (NHER 11743/3565)

The extensive polygon analysis clearly demonstrated that the ‘productive’ focus at Congham North (NHER 25765) is one component of a much wider settlement presence in the Grimston-Congham area. Furthermore, a number of artefact scatters

in Congham hinted at some intriguing continuities and changes in functional zonation, happening between 450 and 1150 AD. Following the analysis a combination of geophysical survey, fieldwalking and detailed plotting of metal detected artefacts, using the methodology outlined in Chapter 4, was undertaken at Congham North (NHER 25765/NHER 35928) and Congham South (NHER 3565 /NHER 11743) in order to investigate these observations in more detail (**Fig. 92, Fig. 93**)

**NHER 25765 : Detailed Plotting of Metal Detector finds**

*Early Anglo-Saxon* **Fig. 98**

Forty-two individual findspots of Early Anglo-Saxon metalwork, with some findspots representing more than one artefact, are located at NHER25765 alone. The range of material, as noted above, is strongly indicative of a cemetery assemblage and includes artefact groups such as girdle hangers, shield mounts, disc brooches, square headed brooches, cruciform brooches, equal arm brooches, wrist clasps and buckles. A single coin, a Burgundian gold tremiss of Goedmar (524-32), may equally represent settlement or burial related activity.

Although there are no distinct patterns which would indicate separate burial foci with certainty, there seem to be two broad concentrations of finds. The first is located at the southwest limit of NHER25765, and merges into another scatter immediately to the north. No chronological distinction can be made between these different concentrations; finds date from the Fifth century (equal arm brooch) to the Seventh century (2 buckles) in the northern concentration, and the Fifth (finger ring) to Seventh/Eighth century (toilet implement and buckle frames) in the southern concentration. Interestingly, functional differences may be tentatively indicated by the recovery of a melted side-knob from a cruciform brooch, indicating a mid-Sixth century cremation in the southern concentration. This find could perhaps provide a context for some of the Early Anglo-Saxon pottery in this area (see below).

There are very few finds from west of the eastern boundary of NHER 25765, suggesting that concentrated activity may not have extended further westwards.

*Middle Anglo-Saxon* **Fig. 98**

Middle Anglo-Saxon metalwork is more widely distributed than Early Anglo-Saxon metalwork, extending east to the probable Roman villa in NHER 25765, and north beyond the spring-line. Metal artefact loss ends c. 300m north of the southern extent of NHER25765 and does not continue beyond the eastern extent of NHER 25765. Even so, the main concentration of artefacts is still to be found towards the western edge of NHER 25765, in an area c.150m in diameter, towards the centre-south of the field.

Recovered artefacts are mostly personal metalwork and include numerous pins (Eighth century), strap ends (Ninth century), fewer hooked tags, and a strap fitting. Six Middle Anglo-Saxon coins have been recovered within this concentration, indicating a discrete focus of trade and exchange. Four of the coins seem to be lost in a north-south line (**Fig. 93**). The coins from this activity focus, all *sceattas*, are Anglo-Saxon issues (Series L, BII (2)), Continental issues (Series D, and Series E) and East Anglian issues (Series R (2)).

South of the main concentration, a less dense scatter of artefacts has been identified. Recovered artefacts include pins, strap ends, a pair of tweezers, an Ansate brooch and a chape. A single coin, an East Anglian Series R derivative sceatta, has also been recovered from this area. A further coin, an undiagnostic sceatta of c.710-50, has been recovered away from the main artefact scatters, c.300m to the east.

The coin and metalwork assemblage indicates a multifunctional occupation focus with a heavy trade and exchange presence. A relative lack of functional metalwork, without supplementary fieldwork, might suggest a weak permanent settlement presence. However, the fieldwalking and geophysics produced a number of informative results here (see below). In addition, two further coins, a mid-Seventh

century tremiss minted in Quentovic, and a Seventh/Eighth denier of Madelinus (series Ma) (minted 670-690) probably come from this activity focus, but do not presently have detailed findspots (and are therefore not included on **Fig. 98**). These finds further support the notion that this site was an important early focus of trade and exchange.

*Late Anglo- Saxon* **Fig. 98**

Late Anglo-Saxon metalwork loss is also strong in HER 25765. However, in contrast to Middle Anglo-Saxon finds, finds loss is less concentrated in the centre-south of the field and is more consistent throughout the overall artefact scatter. Concentrated artefact-loss again stops c. 300m north of the southern extent of NHER25765, and does not continue beyond the eastern edge of NHER 25765. There are also very few finds extending east towards the probable Roman villa, indicating a reduction of activity in this area and perhaps a closer correspondence of activity to the present-day village.

Recovered Late Anglo-Saxon artefacts include a box mount, tweezers (2), disc brooches (one lead/pewter, Tenth-Eleventh century), hooked tags (6), a strap end, finger rings (4), a sword guard, a hinge plate and high-status horse equipment (a bridle cheek piece). In contrast to the Middle Anglo-Saxon material, a greater variety of functional objects seems to indicate a multifunctional settlement presence. Four Late Anglo-Saxon coins span the dates 870-1066 (Anglo-Saxon coins of Eadgar (959-75), Ethelred (a cut half), Aethelred II, and Edward the Confessor). A fifth coin is a rare possible Viking imitation of a Carolingian coin of Charles the Bald (870-875). The recovery of this find, along with a Tenth century silver pin with a Borre style terminal, indicates a degree of Scandinavian/Anglo-Scandinavian influence at this time.

A number of other undated objects also concentrate towards the western extent of the field, perhaps indicating that they may be Anglo-Saxon. These finds include weights, metal working waste, a silver ingot and a Late Anglo-Saxon stone spindle

whorl. If the correlation of undated weights with the most abundant zone of coin and metalwork loss can be taken as indicating a Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon date for the weights, this provides further indication of the importance of trade and exchange during this phase of activity.

**NHER 25765: Geophysical Survey**

The geophysical survey in NHER 25765 covered an area of 3 hectares (100m east-west by 250m north-south) parallel to the western edge of the field. The aim of the survey was to identify the location of boundary features, to see if these could be related to the previously observed artefact concentrations. A previous geophysical survey had been undertaken here by English Heritage (Anon, 1990) as part of the process of Scheduling the probable Roman villa at the eastern extent of the field (see **Fig.96, Fig. 98**). This survey identified a series of rectilinear anomalies, interpreted as relating to the Romano-British site. The new geophysical survey undertaken for this project abutted the western edge of the previous survey. Features from the earlier survey are discussed where relevant to anomalies identified in the new survey.

The new survey revealed a large number of anomalies (both positive and negative), producing highly contrasting magnetic responses (+ 20.1NT to -8.3 NT). Anomalies were particularly concentrated towards the southern limit of the survey area (**Fig. 94**). No features certainly attributable to modern activities were identified suggesting that the interpretative potential of this survey is particular high. However, given the huge amount of Iron Age material recovered during the fieldwalking, a firm interpretation of a number of the identified features as Anglo-Saxon must await future excavation. The identified anomalies are now discussed below from north to south (**Fig. 95**).

Two parallel NNE to SSW aligned positive anomalies were identified (**1**) (each c.2-3 metres wide) running along the length of the western extent of surveyed area. These two, probably contemporary, features are best interpreted as a ditched droveway for the movement of animals or a ditched routeway. The date of these features is

uncertain, but they may well represent an earlier version of the present north-south aligned track, possibly of medieval/post medieval date, that is the current western field boundary. The feature appears to truncate one enclosure (**9**) and is respected by another (**6**), this might indicate an Anglo-Saxon infilling date. However, as the anomaly also seems to define the western limit of an Iron Age pottery scatter (see below) this might indicate an early origin. Although it would be impossible and needlessly crude to equate this potential routeway with the 'Icknield Way', its existence does reinforce the notion of the importance of north-south routes in the development of settlement foci in the area.

Northeast of the possible routeway/droveway (**1**) a number of discrete positive anomalies, apparently in two broad clusters, were observed (**2**). These are interpreted as buried pits containing magnetically responsive fills, although the presence of a number of ferrous 'spikes' makes the identification of the features difficult. Given the huge amount of Iron Age pottery in this part of the survey area, the possible pits (**2**) may provide a context for these finds, indicating the presence of Iron Age settlement.

South of the possible pit clusters (**2**), three further anomalies; one curved, one sub circular with an opening at the northern extent, and one east-west aligned linear (**3**), are visible. These three features appeared to be spatially coherent, and although only faint positive anomalies, may represent buried boundary features. As with the pit clusters (**2**), the huge amount of Iron Age pottery in this part of the survey area provides a speculative date for these features, which would be paralleled at Harford Farm, Caistor St. Edmund (Penn, 2000, 5, Fig.3). A further 20 metres south of these possible settlement boundaries another apparent sub-circular feature (c. 17m in diameter) with an open southern side was identified as a positive anomaly (**4**). This feature might represent a ditched boundary of uncertain date, although an Early Anglo-Saxon burial enclosure or an Iron Age roundhouse seem the most likely interpretations, given the morphology of the feature and the amount of artefactual material of those dates surrounding it.

At the north-eastern limit of the geophysical survey two further parallel NNE to SSW aligned anomalies (c.2-3 metres wide) were observed along a length of c. 140m (**5**) and are also best interpreted as a ditched droveway or routeway. At their southern edge, the features appeared to terminate, perhaps respecting further boundaries observed to the south (see **6**). At their northern observed extent, the features appear to turn eastwards linking with anomalies identified during the English Heritage survey around the villa site (1991). This might indicate a Romano-British date, however, since findspots of four Middle Anglo-Saxon coins align with this anomaly, it might have retained a significance in the early medieval landscape.

Approximately 30 metres south of possible droveway (**5**), three east-west aligned positive anomalies (c.4m wide) were observed over a maximum east-west distance of c.85 m. These anomalies are best interpreted as a major ditched boundary feature; perhaps a single boundary reinstated on a number of occasions. The boundaries (**5**) seemed to respect possible droveway (**1**), and another NNE to SSW aligned anomaly (**7**), possibly also a ditched boundary feature that links to the Roman-British rectilinear ditch system (English Heritage, Anon, 1991). This might indicate that, at some point, all three features were in contemporary use. Given the correlation between boundary features (**6**) and the distribution of Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon pottery an Anglo-Saxon date is suggested.

These features might represent the main northern boundary of an area of enclosed settlement, as evidenced by smaller enclosures (**9-11**) further to the south. The anomalies appear to continue to the east and are indentified in the English Heritage geophysical survey (1990). Extrapolating from the course of these boundaries (**6**) to the west and east, they appear to align with lines fossilised in the present landscape. As **Fig. 96** shows, this would create an enclosed oval area around the now shrunken main settlement of Congham (incorporating St. Andrews church), an area of c.3.5 hectares, explaining the strange curvature of the roads at the southwest extent of NHER 25765.

South of the presumed Anglo-Saxon boundary (**6**) a complex series of anomalies, perhaps indicative of smaller settlement enclosures, were identified (**8, 9, 10**). Features (**9**) and (**10**), both strong positive/negative features (c.30m by 15 m in size), seemed to represent small ditched working enclosures, or animal pens. The positive/negative fills indicate that the ditched features may have been in-filled with heavily fired material. Given the discovery of the Late Anglo-Saxon pottery production site immediately to the west at NHER 3569 this is a possible source of this fired material, although the undated metalworking debris recovered in NHER 25765 is another. Enclosure (**10**) was apparently contemporary with an unusual triangular shaped enclosure (**11**) which might also have abutted on a droveway (**1**). The northeast to southwest aligned eastern side of enclosure (**11**) appears to mirror a present-day north-west to south-east aligned track running towards St. Andrews church. If a spatial association can indeed be made between the two features, then an Anglo-Saxon or medieval date for enclosure (**11**) can be suggested.

The final enclosure to be identified was a possible ditched double oval enclosure (**8**) apparently abutting the northern edge of enclosure (**11**). This positive anomaly, although ephemeral, appears to truncate enclosures (**9**) and (**10**), thus implying a degree of boundary superimposition and dense land-use in the southern part of the surveyed area. Unfortunately, probably due to frequent re-cutting of features, no clear sequence can be interpreted. At the eastern extent of enclosure (**11**) another cluster of discrete positive anomalies, interpreted as possible pits, were observed. Given their spatial association with enclosures (**10**) and (**11**), it might be suggested that they are contemporary with these enclosures.

**NHER 25765: Fieldwalking**

**Figs 95, Fig. 97, Fig. 98**

The fieldwalking survey in NHER 25765 covered an area of 7 hectares (100m east-west by 700m north-south) parallel to the western edge of the field. The survey

aimed to identify any artefact concentrations indicative of functional zones, and the northern extent of concentrated activity. The survey recovered huge amounts of surface ceramics (**Fig. 97**), ceramic building material, and a smaller amount of bone.

The earliest dateable material recovered was a very large concentration of around 550 sherds of Iron Age pottery, indicative of a habitation focus. Both Iron Age Sandy and Iron Age Gritted fabrics were recovered, although as they share a similar distribution no chronological or functional distinction between the ceramic groups is suggested (**Fig. 97**). The presence of a probable Iron Age settlement alongside a routeway (**1**), as indicated by pits (**2**) and enclosures (**3**) located during the geophysical survey is suggested. This settlement morphology is reminiscent of settlements labelled 'ladder settlements' in the Yorkshire Wolds (Beresford and Hurst, 1990, 87-92, Richards, 1999, 71). This earlier settlement focus may provide a context for the extensive Early Anglo-Saxon cemetery evidence seen in the metalwork from NHER 25765; occasionally Iron Age settlements were re-used by Early Anglo-Saxon communities for burial (Lucy, 2000, 126). Why this should be the case is unclear, but it does perhaps indicate an early importance of NHER 25765 in the local landscape, as does the presence of the Roman villa.

Romano-British ceramics were sparse, indicating no more than background agricultural activity. On present evidence it is suggested that concentrated activity is located further east towards the probable Roman villa at the eastern end of NHER 25765.

Diagnostic Early Anglo-Saxon decorated pottery is restricted to 9 sherds. However, Early-Middle Anglo-Saxon pottery was observed in abundance (72 sherds) with concentrations towards the south and north of the surveyed area corresponding with the profuse areas of Early Anglo-Saxon metal loss (**Fig. 98**). Given the contrasting distributions with Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon pottery, it can perhaps be suggested that the Early-Middle Anglo-Saxon handmade pottery at Congham is actually properly 'early' in date. Some shift between Early and Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon activity zones is also implied. The correspondence of Early Anglo-Saxon

pottery with a metalwork scatter (and a human femur) at the southern extent of the survey area suggests that the pottery may represent ploughed-out cremation/accessory vessels as opposed to settlement debris. In contrast, Early Anglo-Saxon pottery to the north extends north of areas of contemporary metalwork finds-loss perhaps indicating areas of buried settlement. The fieldwalking seems to have identified the northern extent of concentrated Early Anglo-Saxon activity.

A scatter of 61 sherds of Middle Anglo-Saxon Ipswich Ware was recovered during fieldwalking, but no imported material was recovered. Interestingly, finds loss was less at the southern end of the survey area where a number of geophysical anomalies, potentially indicative of a settlement focus have been identified (**9-12**). Instead, loose concentrations of Ipswich Ware were identified in the centre-north of the surveyed area around the area of profuse Middle Anglo-Saxon coin and metalwork loss. This area seems to represent a multi-functional activity zone, perhaps a market/fair, adjacent to, but *removed from*, the main settlement enclosure; associated finds of undated lead weights, used in transactions, might support this argument. Finds relating to production, for example metalworking waste, might further indicate a multi functional activity zone, or a focus that changes in character over time. Unfortunately, as this material is undated this observation remains conjectural.

This distribution of Middle Anglo-Saxon artefacts perhaps indicates that pottery loss was related to the circuit of activities that produced the metalwork/coin scatter. If we therefore imagine a Middle Anglo-Saxon 'market zone', with use related loss of Ipswich Ware, we might also imagine Ipswich Ware containers being accidentally broken or discarded in this zone during exchange. This could take place during the payment of rent or tax or in trade, supposing a transaction in commodities contained in Ipswich Ware vessels, goods such as food, honey or, perhaps most likely, salt, or alternatively transactions involving the pottery itself (Hutcheson, 2006, Blinkhorn, 1999). Interpreting the mode of such a transaction, and what it would imply about the nature of Mid-Late Anglo-Saxon elite control at Congham North is, however, another question altogether.

A faint scatter of Ipswich Ware towards the northern limit of the fieldwalked area might indicate cultivated land but, overall, seems to confirm that the northern extent of the activity focus has been defined.

A larger assemblage of 174 sherds of Late Anglo-Saxon Thetford-type wares was recovered. As with the Middle Anglo-Saxon Ipswich Ware, finds loss was less at the southern end of the survey area. However, an extremely dense concentration of Thetford Ware was noted in the central portion of the surveyed area, directly overlying possible east-west boundaries (**6**) identified during geophysical survey, suggesting that the pottery had perhaps been dumped in these features as a component of primary refuse and then brought to the surface by the plough. This phenomenon is interesting as it suggests that a dense pottery scatter at Congham may represent not a habitation focus *per se*, but the boundary between an 'on-site' habitation zone to the south, and an 'off-site' zone to the north, the area between routeway ditches **1** and **5** (Schofield 1989, 460–70; Bintliff and Snodgrass, 1988).

The on-site habitation zone at the southern end of NHER 25765 contains many geophysical anomalies indicative of multiple phases of small enclosures (**9-11**), but far less Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon ceramic material. This phenomenon, where areas of refuse deposition are revealed by an artefact scatter but an adjacent settlement is manifest as a blank collection unit, has been noted at other early medieval sites, for example, Maxey, Lincolnshire (Schofield 1991, 4). The off-site zone to the north is characterised by moderate Late Anglo-Saxon pottery finds, perhaps present as a result of refuse incorporated into the ploughsoil assemblage as a component of manure (Lambrick 1977, 36) a phenomenon also noted at Witton, North East Norfolk (Lawson, 1983).

As with the Ipswich Ware, a faint scatter of Thetford-type wares towards the northern edge of the fieldwalked area might indicate cultivated land but the northern extent of concentrated activity has been defined.

Interestingly, considering the amount of possibly imported metalwork and regionally imported coinage, regionally imported pottery was restricted to 1 sherd of Stamford ware and 2 sherds of Lincolnshire shelly ware (no continental imports were recovered). This might be explained by the proximity of the emergent pottery works at Grimston. Given that regionally imported metalwork and coinage *is* present it might indicate that pottery was subject to contrasting spheres of regional circulation to metalwork and coinage at this time. The Late Anglo-Saxon assemblage from Congham contrasts strongly with the contemporary assemblage from Burnham (Chapter 8) where Lincolnshire wares are far better represented. This probably indicates different exchange networks for the two sites.

Later ceramics were also abundant, indicating continued activity until the post-medieval period. Retained medieval unglazed pottery (Eleventh-Thirteenth century in date), although abundant, does not feature the same distinct distribution as is observed in the Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon pottery (**Fig. 97**). This might indicate a further change of functional zones and perhaps the disuse of boundaries (**6**) for rubbish dumping, although whether this signifies a shift in settlement foci is uncertain.

**Additional Fieldwalking at NHER 35928**

**Fig. 96**

The fieldwalking exercise in NHER 25765 successfully identified the northern extent of the Middle- Late Anglo-Saxon market/settlement. Further fieldwalking was also undertaken to identify the western extent of Congham North, east of NHER 25765, where finds of Middle Anglo-Saxon metalwork (a pin) at NHER35928, and pottery (Ipswich Ware) at NHER 2210 had previously been made.

The fieldwalking recovered a small amount of Ipswich Ware, Thetford Ware, medieval unglazed pottery (Eleventh-Thirteenth centuries) and animal bone,

extending a maximum of 100m west of the eastern extent of NHER 25765, and 120m north of the south-east corner of the field containing NHER polygons 22210 and 35928. This material seems to reflect agricultural cultivation as opposed to concentrated activity, and confirms that the main activity focus is restricted to NHER 25765.

This fieldwalking exercise seems to confirm that the east-west aligned pathway north of St. Andrew's church (aligned to geophysical anomaly (**6**)) represents the northern boundary of concentrated Anglo-Saxon/Medieval settlement activity.

The combined fieldwalking, geophysics and plotting of metal detected finds at NHER 25765 has demonstrated the possibility that many rural centres previously labelled 'productive sites' might actually comprise complex multifunctional settlements, with a possible market or fair as one component of this arrangement and that changes to functional zones occur over time (as evidenced by pottery shifts). However because this settlement focus remains more or less spatially stable, probably from the Seventh century onwards, the analytical potential of the resulting superimposed surface artefact signatures is somewhat reduced. To assess the relative fortunes of this site we need to be able to compare it to the evidence from the probable settlement focus immediately to the south at NHER 3565/11743.

**NHER 11743/NHER 3565: Detailed Plotting of Metal Detector finds**

*Early Anglo-Saxon* **Fig. 99**

Early Anglo-Saxon evidence from Congham South is abundant, and mostly indicative of a cemetery presence (NHER 11743/30754). The artefacts in NHER 11743 form two broad clusters. At the northern end of the field , recovered artefacts include girdle hangers (2), brooch fragments (a supporting arm brooch, a cruciform brooch and a small long brooch dating to the Fifth century) and a wrist clasp (Sixth century) indicate a possible burial of the Fifth to Sixth centuries. Towards the southern side of

the field, recovered artefacts consist of buckles (a kidney-shaped buckle, Sixth century, and an oval buckle, Fifth to Seventh centuries) and brooch fragments (small long, long, 2 cruciform, Fifth to Sixth century in date), indicating a burial focus of the Fifth to Seventh centuries. Another intriguing find is a Merovingian gold tremiss, minted in Dorestad during the Sixth century. It is unclear whether this artefact is associated with a burial, allowing for the alternative possibility of an early focus of trade/exchange here.

A less dense scatter of artefacts, also likely to represent burials, is located in NHER 30754, further to the east. Recovered artefacts include, from the north of the field, a disc brooch and a girdle hanger, and from the south, two cruciform brooches, three small-long brooch fragments, two girdle hangers (one Sixth century) and an annular brooch. This material appears to represent the eastern extent of Early Anglo-Saxon activity in the immediate area.

South of NHER 11743, in NHER 3565, further artefacts have been recovered. These include a Style 1 belt mount, a small long brooch fragment (Fifth -Sixth centuries) and a heat-disturbed cruciform brooch (possibly indicative of a cremation burial). These artefacts must be considered southern outliers to the main zones of burial activity. The prominent Middle Anglo-Saxon presence in this field indicates that this activity focus became more active between the Early and Middle Anglo-Saxon periods.

*Middle Anglo-Saxon* **Fig. 100**

As noted above, the Middle Anglo-Saxon artefacts from NHER 3565 are exceptionally varied. A habitation focus has already been excavated, with a wide range of functional and personal metalwork represented. Recovered personal artefacts include pins (3) and ansate brooches (2). A single Middle Anglo-Saxon coin, a series K sceatta with a possible East Kent source (Abramson, 2006, 18), provides some evidence for a coin using population. A degree of status is indicated by the presence of a silver pin (Eighth-Ninth century) and stylus fragment. Unfortunately further work was prevented by the landowner.

Recent metal detecting has also shown that Middle Anglo-Saxon artefacts were lost in abundance in NHER 11743. Recovered artefacts include Ipswich Ware (unsystematically collected), pins (including a styliform pin, Eighth to Ninth century, a Wrythen headed pin, Seventh to Eighth centuries, a pyramid head pin, Eighth-Ninth century, a spherical headed pin, Eighth-Ninth century), tweezers, and hooked tags (Eighth century and Ninth century). Three Middle Anglo-Saxon coins have also been recovered; two continental Series E *sceattas*, and a solitary East Anglian Series R *sceatta*, as has a sherd of imported pottery; a flanged rim of a spouted pitcher in a fine white fabric (Rogerson, pers comm.). This evidence starts to add some weight to the interpretation that the NHER 3565/11743 settlement focus was a *rival* focus of trade and exchange activity to NHER 25765, something that is much clearer by the Late Anglo-Saxon period. It was also possible to carry out a geophysical survey here to investigate the site further.

Four further artefacts, a lozenge shaped mount and three hooked tags have been recovered from northwest of the main artefact scatters at NHER 30754. These finds may mark the northern extent of concentrated activity relating to 'Congham South' (there certainly seems to be a genuine break in activity between the NHER 3565/11743 focus and the 'productive' site at NHER 25765), or alternatively stray losses associated with movement through the landscape.

*Late Anglo-Saxon* **Fig. 101**

There is sustained, but reduced, finds-loss of Late Anglo-Saxon metalwork. However, as Thetford Ware pottery (unsystematically collected) has been recovered from all three fields, buried settlement foci may be present (NHER 11743, 30754 and 3565), indeed reduced quantities of metalwork may be a reflection of regional trends rather than a genuine reduction in concentrated activity (see Chapter 3).

NHER 3565 remains an important focus of artefact loss. Recovered artefacts include a stirrup/harness fitting, a stylus, a ring-headed Viking pin, and a copper alloy ingot**.**

The stylus and horse-furniture may indicate a high status presence, while the pin indicates Anglo-Scandinavian influence. The ingot and three coins also recovered from the field (a Danelaw minted St. Edmund memorial coin and two illegible Tenth-Eleventh century pennies) indicate an increased importance of trade and exchange at the site, during a time in which coin circulation is generally restricted. At the northern extent of NHER 3565, human remains have been observed (NHER 3562) perhaps relating to the now disappeared church of All Saints. It is possible that transformations in the material culture profile that we see at Late Anglo-Saxon NHER 3565 is a direct result of the foundation of a church here.

Finds loss is also high in NHER 11743 and falls into two distinct clusters; one at the eastern side of the field near NHER 3562 and a concentration at the wet fringing west of the field. From the west of the field, finds represent a typical settlement signature (with some coin use) and include a Tenth century finger ring, a box/casket, a hooked tag, two Ninth to Tenth century strap ends, and a Viking penny of c.880-899. In contrast, at the eastern side of the field, recovered artefacts include a finger ring fragment, a harness fitting, a Tenth century strap end, and four identical Viking pennies dated 895-918. The coins may well represent a ploughed-out coin hoard and offer an interesting insight into the potential insecurities of certain elements of the population, as well as the diverse possible roles of coinage, in Ninth to Tenth century Congham.

Late Anglo-Saxon finds in the north east field (NHER 30754) include a lead trial piece from a Winchester strap end, an Eleventh century stirrup mount and two disc brooches (one is a Tenth century Borre style brooch). A Late Anglo-Saxon furniture fitting is also not located. The number of artefacts is greater than the Middle Anglo-Saxon finds, perhaps suggesting an expansion of Late Anglo-Saxon activity outwards from the nucleus of NHER 25565 to the south. Interestingly, diagnostic artefacts here date exclusively to the Tenth and Eleventh centuries perhaps indicating a trend towards later activity.

**NHER 11743: Geophysical Survey**

**Fig. 102, Fig. 103**

The geophysical survey in NHER 11743, using the methodology outlined in Chapter 4, covered a total area of 2 hectares (120m east-west by 160m north-south) at the eastern extent of the sub-rectangular field. The aim of the survey was to identify the location of boundary features, and enhance the interpretation of the moderate Middle Anglo-Saxon and strong Late Anglo-Saxon metal artefact concentrations. Previous aerial photography of NHER 11743 had suggested the presence of medieval house platforms in the northwest part of the field (bordering the present-day road) and it was therefore expected that the geophysical survey would identify these features.

The survey revealed a large number of highly contrasting discrete magnetic anomalies (positive and negative, +21.3 NT to -20.7 NT), particularly concentrated towards the northern and eastern extremities of the surveyed areas where medieval house platforms were expected (**Fig.102**). Within this highly complex picture, there are still a few features that might be interpretable as Anglo-Saxon or earlier in date (**Fig. 103**).

The northeast part of the survey area, towards the present-day road, contained a huge number of small, strong, positive anomalies with negative 'halos' (**1**) and clear areas of buried rubble (**1a**). The main identified features (**1**) extended c.60m south of the northern edge of the survey area and c.70 m west of the eastern side of the survey area. These anomalies appear to represent the wall lines of house platforms based on a rectangular unit of c.15m (east-west) by c.8m (north-south), and the positive-negative effect may be caused by shallowly buried rubble and fired material. The western edges of the house plots (**1**) seem to take their NNE to SSW alignment from an earlier landscape feature, and feature (**9**) is a possible candidate (see below).

Similar 'house platforms' have been observed at a number of deserted medieval village sites, for example, Wharram Percy (Beresford and Hurst, 1990). Plot boundaries (**2**) (*crofts*) extending from the western extent of the house platforms (*tofts*) were also observed. The presence of these features suggests extensive medieval occupation in this area, possibly around the now disappeared churches. A similar phenomenon has been noted at a number of other Norfolk sites and the phenomenon of the shrunken village is often interpreted as a direct result of a significant decline in population caused by the Black Death of 1349 (Dymond, 1985, 135). Others have argued that the Black Death was just one of several contributing factors, acting over an extended period of time stretching from the Fourteenth through to the Eighteenth centuries (Davison, 2005, 88).

West of the potential 'crofts' (**2**) a series of rectilinear boundaries with a plot structure measuring c. 40m east-west by 20m north-south were identified (**3**) as strong negative anomalies on a similar alignment (and therefore speculatively of a similar date). The negative signature may be due to the presence of large quantities of rubble within ditch fills. These features are best interpreted as field boundaries, although there is a large amount of disturbance in the area. North to south aligned possible boundary (**4**) may represent the western extent of these fields at wet-fringing ground.

Also in the northern part of the surveyed area, a series of rectilinear boundary features running on a northeast to southwest alignment were identified as strong positive/negative features **(5**). The relationship between these features and house platforms (**1**)/(**2**) is unclear, although it is suspected that feature (**5**) is later in date. The presence of boundaries (**5**) does indicate a re-planning of this area at some point during the settlement sequence. Indeed, these observed changes might well be related to the imposition of the now lost All Saints or St. Mary's churches.

Towards the western end of NHER 11743, two amorphous positive/negative anomalies may represent dumps of building rubble or fired material ((**6**) and (**7**)). The date of these features is uncertain, although possible dump (**7**) lies discretely within the northern half of rectilinear enclosure (**3**) suggesting that this enclosure was visible when the possible dump was made.

Within the southern half of the surveyed area, the density of features becomes markedly reduced. A number of faint NNE to SSW aligned positive anomalies, apparently twinned and parallel were identified (8). Their function is uncertain, but they may be the geophysical reflection of a relict agricultural regime. However, a rather stronger set of twin parallel positive anomalies (**9**), also on a NNE to south-SSW alignment, are best interpreted as a routeway or droveway. Since the medieval house platforms (**1**)/(**2**) may take their alignment from this feature it may be considered to be of some antiquity. It is of further interest that a number of Early Anglo-Saxon artefacts cluster in this area. In NHER 25765 similar features (although more apparent) were interpreted as routeways of prehistoric date. Clearly excavation would be required to resolve this, but the presence of the same routeway could provide a context for the early artefactual finds and the also for early settlement development in NHER 11743.
In the central portion of the surveyed area in NHER 11743 two extremely faint sub-circular interrupted positive anomalies were identified (**10**); c.10m diameter (western anomaly) and c.20m diameter (eastern anomaly). These features are ephemeral and cannot be interpreted with any confidence. However, given the early Anglo-Saxon burial evidence in NHER 11743, it is worth noting that the features are morphologically similar to prehistoric round barrows, often re-used for Early Anglo-Saxon burial (Lucy, 2000, 120).

At the south east edge of the survey area, a faint positive anomaly, aligned north-south (20m in observed length by 3m in width), might reflect a buried ditched boundary of uncertain date. Spatially, this anomaly might relate to two further east-west aligned positive anomalies (**12**) and (**13**) of similar proportions (observed over

east-west distances of 55m and 60m respectively). These features are all of uncertain date and function but given their lack of alignment with the later medieval features to the northern extent of the field, they may be boundaries that relate to the northern part of the NHER 3565 settlement focus, located further to the south west. A further ENE to WSW positive anomaly (**15**) is also interpretable as a boundary ditch, and does not share an obvious alignment with medieval features to the north. None of these features extend to the western side of the survey area perhaps indicating that this was a wet area in the Anglo-Saxon period. This observation is of potential interest given the placing of a probable Late Anglo-Saxon hoard in the western part of NHER 11743, implying that the hoard was deliberately deposited in a wet location on the margins of a settlement.

A series of east-west and north-south aligned gridded anomalies (**16**) and east-west aligned striations (**17**) were identified and reflect buried modern field drains, and the modern ploughing regime respectively. A large area of, probably modern, buried rubble was also observed in association with the modern service trench that uncovered human bone at NHER3562 (**14**). However, in advance of further sub-surface investigation, the possible identification of (**14**) as rubble from the site of the now lost All Saints church cannot be entirely ruled-out.

In conclusion, in addition to observing an important zone of probable later medieval settlement, the geophysical survey in NHER 11743 suggested that Anglo-Saxon activity might have been orientated around an early routeway that ran on slightly elevated land in a generally wet area. Occasional boundaries which may be of an early date might reflect the periphery of the Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon focus at NHER3565 or, though it is less likely, activity relating to the now lost All Saints church NHER 3562.

## Coinage and Metalwork Profile: 'North' and 'South' Compared

**Fig. 93, Fig. 104, Fig. 105**

A basic statistical comparison of the coinage and metalwork from the two 'sites' can be used to emphasise their contrasting material culture profiles. This discussion amalgamates the Early Medieval Coin Corpus and NHER records.

The pattern of coin loss for Congham as a whole (using located coins only) suggests an early focus of trade and exchange, with a heavy early continental coin presence that ceases between c.760 and c.870, prior to renewed coin loss from c. 870 (**Fig. 104**). This fits the generally observed trends in Norfolk coin loss (**Fig. 30**, Chapter 3), although the decline at Congham is notably sharp. The first coin loss following the c.760-870 hiatus, a pierced coin of Charles the Bald is, however, a late Carolingian loss and might indicate the continuance of pre-'Viking' exchange networks (Storey, 2003, 254-255).

If we break down coin loss within the proposed northern and southern foci at Congham, contrasting patterns are noticeable (**Fig.93**, **Fig. 105**). Early and Middle Anglo-Saxon coin loss is heavy at Congham North (NHER 25765) (11 coins) and shows a peak at c.680-710. However, at Congham South (NHER 3565/11743) Early and Middle Anglo-Saxon coin loss is far less (5 coins) with no marked Seventh to Eighth century rise. This might reflect the later development of Congham South, as suggeted by the remaining archaeological evidence. In contrast, proportions of continetal coins (such as Series E and D *sceattas*) are similar at the two sites, perhaps suggesting that neither was the more integrated in European exchange networks.

By the Late Anglo-Saxon period, coin loss is more prolific at Congham South, but the nature of economic activity is uncertain. The presence of a probable hoard of St.Edmund memorial coins suggests a politically unsettled phase, as opposed to a thriving economic environment. In addition, the presence of a Viking imitation of an Alfred Penny (c.880-899) reminds us of wider tensions that may have affected local settlement during the later Ninth and Tenth centuries. In this respect, the presence of a late Carolingain coin at Congham North might even be interpretable as reflecting

a deliberate attempt to realign with previous economic networks at this focus of earlier importance.

If total located metalwork findspots of personal and functional metalwork, in addition to coinage, are also considered for Congham's North and South, further patterns are discernable. Firstly, the two sites have rather different find-loss profiles during the Early Anglo-Saxon period. Congham North, the most abundant focus of artefact loss, has a far higher proportion of functional metal objects (consisting of items such as shield mounts, sword and bucket strap), such items are not present at Congham South. The presence of weapon related items might indicate 'warrior' burials and a high status element at Congham North which is not to be found at the Southern focus. This provides a tentative insight into potential status differentiation between Congham's North and South that resulted in contrasting economic fortunes.

Secondly, finds loss seems to decline at Congham North between the Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon periods, while finds loss at Congham South remins stable (and coin loss actualy increases). If quantities of metalwork loss can be used to interpret a settlements economic prosperity then this crude analysis seems to suggest that Congham North experiences long term decline, whilst Congham South persists. Furthermore, as Late Anglo-Saxon metalwork loss declines on a regional basis in the Tenth century (Loveluck, 2008), it might be possible to suggest that proportionally Congham South increases in propsperity.

## Late Anglo-Saxon and Medieval historical and archaeological background

**Fig. 89**

Both Grimston and Congham parishes are long, thin and orientated east-west. It has been postulated that this arrangement is to take full advantage of the full variety of

landscape zones, from upland to fen-edge, allowing for a mixed farming economy, and that these 'estates' may have been partly formalised as early as the Roman period (Lyons, 2004). Indeed, it is clear that both parishes were attractive areas for settlement as early as the Roman period, as indicated by the part-excavated villa east of Grimston village (Smallwood, 1997, 14) and the probable villa discussed above at Congham (Rogerson, 2003, 115). Ease of communication, via the 'Icknield Way', which passes directly through the Anglo-Saxon site, may have provided an important catalyst for early settlement (Gurney, 1993).

At Domesday (1086), Congham was an unspectacular holding. It had a single church, a fishery and a salt house, and was mostly held by William de Warenne (DB 8, 26, 27); smaller estates in both Grimston and Congham were held by Berner the Crosbowman (DB 51, 1, 2). A large number of freemen (a total of 26) were split amongst three estates, and two further freemen listed under Grimston indicate an early relationship between the two settlements (DB 8, 27). Three churches (although only one is now extant) later in the Middle Ages need not indicate any special status by Norfolk standards (Rogerson, 2003, 115).

Grimston is currently larger than Congham and, at Domesday (TRW), was a wealthy and well populated settlement, with large multifunctional estates held mostly by the Bishop of Bayeux (DB 2, 2) and William de Warenne (DB 8, 25,27). Prior to the Conquest (TRE) the land was held by Archbishop Stigand (DB 2, 2) and, interestingly, a free woman named Aelfeva (DB 8, 25.).

The place name etymologies of Congham and Grimston are of some interest. Congham is exclusively of Old English derivation, but of uncertain interpretation, and may translate as 'place (?village) at the hill' or 'place (?village) at the bend' (Ekwall, 1971). Place names ending in –ham are thought to date to very early in the Anglo-Saxon period, and are sometimes taken to indicate 'primary' areas of occupation (Penn, 1993, 36). In contrast, Grimston is a classic Old English-Old Scandinavian hybrid name; the Old English element 'tun' refers to a 'farmstead or estate', the Old Scandinavian 'Grimr' element is a personal name. Names formed in this way are in

fact generally referred to as ‘Grimston hybrids’. Names ending in ‘tun’ are often described as ‘secondary’, denoting settlements that were originally subsidiary to or dependent upon –ham settlements (Wade, 1983, 75-76, Pestell, 2003, 127).

If we accept that Grimston may initially have been a subsidiary focus to Congham, then the contrasting holdings at Domesday gain more interpretative significance. In particular, accounting for the role of the freemen (and women) at these two late Anglo-Saxon/medieval centres, might help their contrasting fortunes to be discussed; this is undertaken in Chapter 12.

# Chapter 7: Rudham

## Extensive Polygon Analysis: Early Anglo-Saxon

**Fig. 106**

The sprawling, multifocal nature of surface evidence from East and West Rudham lends itself very well to extensive polygon analysis, prior to more detailed plotting and interpretation of the metal artefact assemblages.

Early Anglo-Saxon material is extensively distributed throughout the modern parishes over an east-west aligned strip 3km in length and centred on the modern main roads through the villages. Personal metalwork such as brooches and wrist clasps (e.g. NHER 41004) dominate and mostly indicate cemetery related material, particularly NHER 41004/40787 in East Rudham and NHER 30441 in West Rudham. In contrast to Burnham and Congham, much of the Early Anglo-Saxon metalwork is dated to the Fifth and Sixth centuries, with Seventh century material also well represented. This perhaps indicates the early importance of the area, with early occupation articulated around Roman routeways and the natural watershed (Rogerson, 2003, 118).

Early Anglo-Saxon pottery finds, indicative of either settlement or cremation burials, are restricted to two sites: NHER 28131 in West Rudham and NHER 41004/40787 in East Rudham. The lack of further settlement related debris at NHER 41004/40787 perhaps indicates ploughed-out cremation urns. The pottery finds at NHER 28131 lie within an area of concentrated Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon findspots, including Ipswich Ware and Thetford-type Ware pottery, suggesting that the apparent Early Anglo-Saxon pottery might in fact represent the hand-made component of a later ceramic assemblage.

## Detailed Metal Detected Data: Early Anglo-Saxon settlement and material culture

**Fig. 106, Fig. 110**

Detailed plotting of Early Anglo-Saxon metal finds indicates up to seven separate surface-finds foci in the Rudham environs, although the true extent of these 'sites' has not been investigated. These are now discussed from east to west. Stray finds of personal metalwork have been noted beyond the southern extent of the main concentrations of artefact loss (NHER 35248 and NHER 39620).

*NHER 41004/40787*

The most prominent finds cluster in East Rudham parish is the previously mentioned probable cemetery towards the eastern half of NHER 41004/40787. The site lies on a low ridge beyond the eastern limit of the present-day village. The northern and eastern extent of this activity focus lies within NHER 40987 and NHER 40573, where finds loss does not appear to be concentrated (restricted to personal metalwork: small-long brooches and wrist clasps from NHER 40987). The southern extent of activity is bounded by a low-lying wet area.

The surface finds assemblage is dominated by brooches (cruciform, long and small long) predominantly dating to the Fifth and Sixth centuries (Hines, 1993), although finds dating to the Fourth-Fifth centuries (a 'military'-style buckle) and the Seventh century (strap fitting, see below) indicate a longer overall chronology. Other artefacts include girdle hangers, strap ends, and a wrist clasp. A high-status element is indicated by the recovery of the base of hanging bowl featuring a triskele design and traces of red and blue enamel dated to the Fifth-Seventh century (Brenan 1991).

Hanging bowls at Sutton Hoo, Suffolk were used to contain high status-cremation burials (Carver, 2005) and this is a possibility at East Rudham.

Many of the recovered artefacts exhibit the expected Anglian or Saxon influences, but two artefacts, a Seventh century strap fitting (Macgregor, 1997) and a hairpin dated to the late Fourth or Fifth century by Bohme (1974), but considered to be late Sixth-Seventh century by Rogerson (pers comm.), are *Frankish* and demonstrate either direct or indirect exchange links with this part of continental Europe (**Fig. 111**). Interestingly, Chapter 3 also noted a loose concentration of Early Anglo-Saxon Frankish metalwork in West Norfolk, perhaps indicating some Frankish political influence (Hedeager, 1992, 292). Given that activity at NHER 41004/40787 is not overlaid by significant Middle Anglo-Saxon material this might signal an end of 'Frankish' influence - whatever that entailed - in the area.

*NHER 29031/40547/308441*

A second apparently discrete cluster of metal finds has been observed in East Rudham parish (NHER 29031/40547/308441), 900m west of the NHER 41004/40787 cemetery, immediately east of built-up East Rudham and St. Mary's church (NHER 3645). Because of the infrequent opportunity for metal detecting the relative density and overall extent of the artefact scatter is not clear

The artefact profile is somewhat different from NHER 41004/40787. Located finds include weapons (a Seventh century pyramid sword-mount and a Sixth-Seventh century shield mount, NHER 40547) and tweezers (NHER 29031) as well as the more ubiquitous square headed brooches (NHER 30841). At present it is uncertain whether this activity represents a further cemetery focus, it is perhaps more likely that the Seventh century material relates to the earliest phase of activity pertaining to the East Rudham 'productive' site (see below) as opposed to discrete burial activity.

*NHER 30441/28130, 28131, 30883*

In West Rudham, surface metal finds indicate three potentially discrete ploughed-out burial groups within an extensive overall activity focus (NHER 30883, NHER 28131 and NHER 28130/30441). As with East Rudham, the true extent of these 'sites' has not been systematically investigated.

*NHER 30888*

Early Anglo-Saxon metal artefacts are located towards the northwest edge of NHER 30888, on slightly elevated land overlooking tributaries of the River Wensum 200m further east. The metalwork assemblage strongly suggests burials, and comprises wrist clasp fragments and brooches (small-long, cruciform and Sixth century S-shaped). A putative status element is indicated by the presence of a gold finger ring, which may also be a grave good.

Approximately 550m to the west, further artefacts are located within NHER 28131. However, individual findspots between NHER 30888 and NHER 28131 (a small long brooch (NHER 28131) and a pelta vessel mount (NHER 30611)), hint that these discrete activity foci are a product of uneven artefact recovery and thus more apparent than real.

*NHER 28131*

Early Anglo-Saxon metal artefacts cover a north-south linear area (c.100m north-south by 50m east-west) towards the northwest extent of NHER 28131, perhaps reflecting activity adjacent to a routeway (Rogerson, 2003, 118). Finds include wrist clasps (3), a brooch, tweezers (2), and a gold finger ring.

Unfortunately, there are not enough metal finds to make firm observations concerning the nature of activity here. Yet, the assemblage does differ to the probable cemetery at NHER 30888; brooches dominate at NHER 30888 but not at NHER 28131, where the presence of tweezers need not necessarily indicate a grave

good. Further work is required to ascertain whether the apparent differences between NHER 28131 and NHER 30888, are functional, chronological or more apparent than real.

*NHER 28130/30441*

Beyond the northern limit of NHER 28131, is the largest discrete Early Anglo-Saxon metalwork scatter in the Rudham environs. The surface metalwork assemblage is particularly concentrated north of St. Peter's Church (NHER 30441) but covers an interrupted north-south band measuring c.400m north-south and 130m east-west.

Recovered artefacts include numerous brooches (Sixth century small long x 3, Fifth century long, cruciform x 4, Great Square Headed and S-shaped fragments), a girdle hanger, a belt fitting (possibly Middle Anglo-Saxon), a shield-on-tongue buckle, a finger ring, a looped pin head, a buckle, wrist clasps (x 2) and, unusually, a green glass melon bead. This assemblage certainly indicates a ploughed-out inhumation cemetery dating to the Fifth and Sixth centuries, with a certain amount of variety in grave assemblages indicated. Interestingly, in contrast to the Seventh century material at East Rudham (NHER 40547/30841/29031), no weapons were recovered, perhaps suggesting some status difference dependent on chronology between the two sites.

*NHER 32133*

Finds of wrist clasps and a cruciform brooch north of the main east-west road through West Rudham perhaps indicate a sixth burial focus at NHER 32133, although this focus could relate to NHER 30441 further south. However, as NHER 32133 becomes an important Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon activity focus, these finds at least indicate that this occupation does not emerge from a vacuum, which might have interpretative implications.

Clearly the Rudham environs were an important focus for burial during the Fifth and Sixth centuries. Furthermore, because of the close relationship between Early Anglo-Saxon settlement and cemetery (Chester-Kadwell, 2009, 149-150 ) it might be suggested that the Rudham environs would also have been an important settlement zone. Yet, it is not until the Seventh century that enigmatic evidence for occupation, rather than burial only, emerges. Interestingly, both 'productive' site locations (NHER 30841 and NHER 28130/28131) have Early Anglo-Saxon finds, hinting that these sites were already significance points in the local landscape prior to the Middle Anglo-Saxon period.

## Extensive Polygon Analysis: Middle Anglo-Saxon

**Fig. 107**

Middle Anglo Saxon material from East and West Rudham is extensively distributed over an east-west aligned strip roughly 3km in length centred on the modern main roads through the villages. Due to the nature of finds recovery in the Rudhams, metalwork finds predominate, and how 'real' are the observed patterns are is a matter of debate. Areas of finds loss are generally more discrete than the Early Anglo-Saxon evidence and consist of multiple material classes indicative of increasingly nucleated settlement foci. Furthermore, some notable transformations in overall patterns of finds loss occur at NHER 40787/41004, and NHER 32133.

At NHER 40787/41004 in East Rudham, an area of abundant Early Anglo-Saxon finds loss is reduced to an area with almost no Middle Anglo-Saxon material. The only definite Middle Anglo-Saxon artefact here is a Carolingian strap or harness mount which might be significant of movement through the landscape as opposed to an occupation focus. Despite this, the linkage with Carolingian Europe in evidence from the mount is significant, evidencing either affiliation to or emulation of Continental elite activities and artistic ideals. Instead, concentrated Middle Anglo-Saxon activity

overlies an enigmatic zone of Early Anglo-Saxon finds loss at NHER 29031/40547/30841 (hereafter ER).

In West Rudham, the NHER 28130/28131 (hereafter WR1) focus of Early Anglo-Saxon finds loss continues into the Middle Anglo Saxon but finds loss patterns are notably transformed. NHER 32133 (hereafter WR2), an area of unexceptional Early Anglo-Saxon finds north of the main Rudham road, is transformed into an important area of Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon finds loss. Further Middle Anglo-Saxon objects have been recovered at NHER 34530 (strap end) and NHER 30761 (a possible Key), although it is uncertain what level of activity these finds represent. The main activity foci are now considered in detail.

## Detailed Metal Detected data and other surface finds: Middle Anglo-Saxon Settlement Morphology and Material Culture Profile.

**Fig. 107, Fig. 110**

*NHER 29031/34265/30841 (ER).*

The sole Middle Anglo-Saxon activity focus in East Rudham is located on agricultural land adjacent to the present village and 300m east of St. Mary's Church (NHER 3645). The main area of finds loss lies to south of the present east-west road (NHER 30841). Here, infrequent metal detecting and finds reporting has recovered coinage (a North Thames Series BII, a Kentish Series C (700-710) and an East Anglian Series R (730-50) *sceattas*), an equal-arm brooch, a hooked tag (Eighth-Eleventh century) and a 'few' Ipswich Ware pottery sherds (Rogerson, 2003, 117) but no imported pottery. West of the main artefact scatter (NHER 30841) a further coin (a Dorestad Series E sceatta (710-30)) has been recovered (Abramson, 2006, 11). Towards the western extent of the overall 'site' ( NHER 34265), further finds comprise an Eighth-Ninth century disc brooch with backward facing animal ornament, an openwork disc brooch, an Ansate brooch, pins (3), hooked tags (2) and pottery, but no coinage.

Present evidence indicates an activity focus with a population using personal ornamentation and engaged in coin use demonstrative of direct or indirect trade and exchange linking Anglo-Saxon England and the Continent. However, artefact recovery has not been systematic enough to establish whether this was a permanent settlement focus or to identify functional zones. Nevertheless, this activity focus is considered the most 'productive' in the Rudham environs in terms of proportion of coin loss (Rogerson, 2003, 117). It is of further interest that no coins have been recovered north of the main road, where a good range of personal metalwork and pottery has been recovered. Future fieldwork might seek to test the hypothesis that a settlement focus lies to the north of the road (NHER34265), with an accompanying site of trade/exchange to the south (NHER 30841). However, at present, further work is required simply to establish the full extent of this activity focus. A single find of a rare Middle Anglo Saxon spoon at NHER 39531 suggests that a Middle Anglo-Saxon presence of some status might lie to the north and west of St. Mary's Church.

*NHER 28130/28131 (WR1)*

In West Rudham, the most abundant and varied activity focus, NHER 28130/28131 (WR1), lies 1.2km southwest of the East Rudham 'productive' site. The main concentration of Middle Anglo-Saxon finds (180m east-west by 400m north-south) lies to the east of the present north-south road. The northern edge of the metal artefact scatter lies directly east of St.Peter's Church, whilst the southern limit lies directly west of the present hamlet of Pockthorpe. Here, increased opportunities for metal detecting have revealed some exceptional areas of Middle Anglo-Saxon finds loss. In addition, as metal detecting has been frequent, the apparent site extent can be considered largely accurate.

Recovered artefacts include, to the north, strap ends (including a silver strap and mount), pins (at least 5 including a biconical headed pin), Ansate brooches, a pendant, a D-shaped buckle and a disc brooch (NHER 28130) and, to the south, four

strap ends (including 3 Trewhiddle-style Ninth century strap ends (**Fig. 112**), Ansate brooches (6), and hooked tags (2) (NHER 28131). Here, two coins have also been recovered, a Series D sceatta (710-715) and a Series E sceatta (710-730) traditionally regarded as minted in Domburg and Dorestad respectively (Abramson, 2006, 11). A number of metal artefacts in NHER 28130/28131 were lost along a northwest-southeast aligned linear strip, just possibly reflecting a disused routeway (see Geophysical Survey below, p.285).

Although NHER 28130/28131 represents a significant activity focus, with evidence of continental trade/exchange and a population utilising personal ornamentation of some status, it is currently uncertain whether a permanent settlement focus or, perhaps more likely, a site of trade/exchange (with habitation areas beneath the present-day settlement to the north and east) is indicated. Scatters of Ipswich Ware pottery have been noted in both the southern extent of NHER 28130 and centre-west of NHER 28131 (**Fig. 118**), but surface recovery has not yet been systematic enough to ascertain whether the loss patterns indicate settlement or cultivation, let alone distinctive functional zones. This activity focus continues to be of importance during the Late Saxon period.

NHER 28130/28131 (WR1) is separated from NHER 32133 (WR2) further to the north by c.500m of agricultural land (NHER 30441) where far fewer finds have been recovered (a buckle and a strap fitting).

*NHER 32133 (WR2)*

North of the main east-west road through West Rudham, c.500m north of St. Peter's church, an important assemblage of Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon finds has been recovered. Middle Anglo-Saxon finds, dominated by personal metalwork, include an Eighth century silver pin, strap ends (Ninth to Tenth century), Ansate brooch fragments (Eighth-Ninth century), pins (including an Eighth century Witham style

linked pin and  silver pins, one with a lozengiform head), hooked tags, and a stud. Functional objects include a key and tweezer fragments. Other finds include a nummular brooch based on a 4th century Roman coin, and a Carolingian strap distributor. Ipswich Ware pottery has also been recovered. A single coin has been recovered, a series D sceatta (c.695 AD) possibly minted in Domburg, Frisia (Abramson, 2006, 11).

The quantity and variety of recovered objects seems to indicate a permanent Middle Anglo-Saxon settlement focus that replaces a possible Early Anglo Saxon burial focus. Artefact loss continues into the Late Saxon period, suggesting a settlement focus of some status and stability (see below). Unfortunately, finds have generally not been plotted in detail, making any further speculation concerning the presence of intra-site functional zones impossible. However, it can at least be said that here was a settlement focus with a population consuming items of personal ornament with wide ranging artistic influences. The Carolingian strap distributor, dated to the second half of the Ninth century, is considered to have been produced in a North French workshop (as opposed to being a Scandinavian or local copy) (Geake, 1998, Unpublished HER notes). This artefact, presumably lost by a high-status individual, provides important evidence concerning the emergence of new elite identities in West Rudham characterised by their emulation of, or attempted association with, continental Europe (**Fig. 113**). The single coin also provides tentative evidence of continental contact but it is suggested that the main focus of trade and exchange in West Rudham is that located further south at NHER28130/28131.

## Late Anglo-Saxon and Medieval Extensive Polygon Analysis

**Fig. 108**

Superficially, extensive Late Anglo-Saxon material loss in both East and West Rudham occurs in much the same locations as Middle Anglo Saxon material. This seems to imply a degree of settlement 'nucleation' and stability from (at the latest)

the Eighth century, as argued for in East Anglia by Rippon (2009). However, this basic observation does not help to address key questions such as *why* this settlement agglomeration might have occurred or how a polyfocal settlement set-up functioned.

Indeed, a closer appraisal of Late Anglo-Saxon finds loss actually indicates some key spatial transformations. Firstly, finds-loss starts to occur c.2 km east of East Rudham (NHER 32061/30196/30761/29031) on lower lying wet-fringing ground that corresponds with the later documented location of Coxford Priory, founded between 1135 and 1144 (Pestell, 2007, 198) (see Historical Background below, p.289). Finds consists of a Tenth-Eleventh century lead strap end (NHER 32061), a disc brooch (NHER 30761), a possible key (NHER 29031), a box, a spoon and Grimston-Thetford Ware pottery (NHER 30196) indicating a multifunctional Late Anglo-Saxon settlement focus here.

Secondly, in West Rudham, the previously discrete artefact scatters at NHER 32133 (WR2) and NHER 30441/28130/28131 (WR1) merge into a somewhat coalesced surface artefact scatter, perhaps indicating an expansion of concentrated activity reflecting transformation to functional zones within a context of overall settlement stability. This aspect of settlement evolution is best understood through the detailed plotting of all located surface artefact finds, now discussed from east to west.

The abundant Late Anglo-Saxon surface finds continue into the medieval period, where highly prosperous and stable twin High Medieval settlements are indicated by the widespread overall distributions of medieval finds (**Fig. 109**).

## Detailed Metal Detected data and other surface finds: Late Anglo-Saxon Settlement Morphology and Material Culture Profile.

**Fig. 108, Fig.110**

*East Rudham*

*NHER 29031/34265/30841 (ER)*

The Middle Anglo-Saxon activity focus east of St. Peter's Church in East Rudham (NHER 34265/29031/30841 (ER)) remains the most easterly area of abundant artefact loss during the Late Anglo-Saxon period (Rogerson, 2003, 117).

Late Anglo-Saxon finds are reasonably varied, although personal metalwork dominates. Artefacts from the north of the site include a Samahid dynasty Islamic dirham (c.900-950) , and a Tenth century strap end (NHER 34265), whilst further south, a box mount, a Tenth-Eleventh century Strap end, a Borre-style disc brooch and a Bird brooch of Viking type have been recovered (NHER 29031). At the eastern periphery of the site, a Winchester strap end of the Eleventh century and a finger ring have been recovered (NHER 30841).

The combined artefactual evidence indicates an activity focus with a population using personal ornamentation, and functional metal objects (although no iron objects have been recorded). The potential emergence of new Scandinavian or Anglo-Scandinavian social identities is indicated by the presence of the Bird and Borre style brooches. The solitary Arabic dirham, also perhaps provides direct or indirect evidence for Scandinavian activity as these artefacts may have arrived in Anglo-Saxon England via Scandinavian controlled seaways, and were often used as bullion (Metcalf, 2007).

Surface pottery finds (Thetford-type wares, NHER 34265 and NHER 29031 and Stamford Wares, NHER 29031) perhaps indicate a permanent Late Anglo-Saxon settlement towards present-day East Rudham. However, surface recovery has not yet been systematic enough to ascertain the significance or permanence of this activity focus or identify functional zones. Given the evidence for later religious institutions in the environs of the site, it seems likely that ecclesiastical authority had an important part to play in the development of this site.

*NHER 40787/41004/41690*

Limited Late Anglo-Saxon artefact loss in East Rudham also occurs east of the main 'productive' site but over 1km west of the Coxford Priory site. Finds are restricted to a Ringerike style D-shaped buckle (NHER 41004) and, 500 metres to the north west, an early Tenth century disc brooch (NHER 41960), with backward facing animal ornament typical of East Anglia (Ashley, Unpublished). Both artefacts might represent artefact loss during the process of movement through the landscape, as opposed to any real occupation (although a single Thetford Ware rim, perhaps indicative of settlement, has been retrieved from NHER 41004).

Interestingly, two Late Anglo Saxon Copper-alloy ingots have been recovered from NHER 40787. The ingots are similar to other Norfolk examples (Geake, 2001, 242-3), and their respective weights (8.51g (1/3$^{rd}$) and 5.19g (1/5$^{th}$ ) might relate to a standard 'Viking unit of weight' (25/26g) (Blackburn and Rogerson, 1993, 222-4). Whether these artefacts represent Scandinavian activity resulting from a mistrust of Anglo-Saxon coinage is still a matter of debate (Pestell, 2005, 37). Nevertheless, the presence of these ingots does at least remind us that exchange may have continued despite a relative paucity of coinage. Establishing the context of these finds would require further work, but the isolated findspots suggest either stray loss or, in the light of Late Anglo-Saxon finds at NHER 32133 (see below), ingots deposited as part of a now ploughed-out hoard buried away from a settlement focus. If the latter, then this might ultimately tell us a great deal about insecurity and the transformation of social identities in Late Anglo-Saxon East Rudham.

*West Rudham*

As noted above, a key feature of Late Anglo-Saxon West Rudham is the merging of the discrete Middle Anglo-Saxon surface artefact scatters at NHER 32133 (WR2) and NHER 30441/28130/28131 (WR1). However, there do seem to be some functional differences between the metalwork from WR1 and WR2, with WR 2 more indicative

of a settlement focus and WR 1 a slightly more enigmatic focus of trade and exchange (although perhaps also with some habitation presence). For purposes of analysis, these activity foci will be treated below as two separate 'sites'.

*NHER 30441/ 28130/28131/30611 (WR 1)*

Late Anglo-Saxon finds loss continues south of the main east-west road through West Rudham, roughly mirroring the pattern of concentrated Middle Anglo-Saxon finds loss but covering a more extensive area. Within the overall focus, there now seems to be some 'clustering' of finds which might indicate different activity zones of uncertain function. Collectively, these finds indicate a diverse activity focus with a population using personal ornamentation, functional metal objects and coinage; the additional presence of pottery scatters may also indicate permanent occupation foci. These areas are now discussed separately moving from north to south.

Immediately south of an arbitrary line dividing WR1 and WR 2 (**Fig. 110**), a cluster of Late Anglo-Saxon metal work is apparent (NHER 30441). Recovered metalwork includes two mount fragments, a lead strap end, and further east, a Penny of Aethelred II, minted in Norwich (991-7), a convex disc brooch (Ninth-Tenth century), a strap end (Tenth century) and a stirrup mount. Thetford Ware pottery has also been recovered. At the northern extremity of NHER 30441, an unexplored moated site (NHER 30616) is recorded. Many of these sites are considered late medieval in date, but it has been suggested that they may have Late Anglo-Saxon origins (Shelley, 2003).

Further south, another cluster of findspots is located in NHER 28130 and comprises a Viking trefoil brooch, a disc brooch, and a rare Anglo-Scandinavian sword pommel. Unlocated finds include a strap end, fittings (3) and a weight. Within the southern extent of NHER 28130, undated metalworking debris and Thetford-type wares have been also recovered.

South of St. Peter's church (NHER 28131), a group finds, overwhelmingly personal metal work, consists of strap ends (3), a hasp, a Ringerike mount, an equal-arm brooch, a D-shaped buckle, and a Winchester style strap end. Functional objects consist of horse furniture (stirrup mounts (2) and a bridle piece) and a St Peter of York penny (905 AD). Unlocated finds include more personal metalwork (a brooch, a cosmetic spoon, a finger ring, a hooked tag and a pendant), whilst functional objects are represented by a box and a furniture fitting. Within the centre west of NHER 28131, Thetford-type wares have been recovered (**Fig. 118**). Finds-loss does not seem to mirror the linear loss patterns observed within the Middle Anglo-Saxon artefact distributions described above.

The southern extent of NHER 28131 appears to be the main limit of concentrated Late Anglo-Saxon activity in West Rudham. Beyond this, finds include an undated copper alloy ingot (NHER 30611), a Winchester strap end, a hasp and two unlocated coins (a Penny of Cnut (1024-30) and one of Edward the Confessor (1050-53)) while a late Anglo-Saxon finger ring has been recovered from NHER 30883 (see Rogerson and Dallas 1984, F.110 for a parallel). These finds demonstrate the general expansion of Late Anglo-Saxon activity in the Rudham environs, but do not indicate concentrated activity.

*NHER 32133/30441 (WR2)*

The area of Middle Anglo-Saxon finds loss located north of the east-west aligned road through West Rudham continues to be an important activity focus in the Late Anglo-Saxon period. Indeed, given that Late Anglo-Saxon metalwork loss is less abundant at many Norfolk sites, increased artefact loss here is highly significant suggesting a stable activity focus of rising status. Unfortunately, because many of the artefacts found in NHER 32133 are poorly located it is impossible to make further observations concerning likely functional zones.

The range of artefacts, including personal metalwork, functional metalwork and pottery (Thetford Ware and Grimston-Thetford Wares), indicates a multifunctional and probably permanent settlement focus. Personal metalwork includes hooked tags (8, including examples of Ninth century Trewhiddle style, Tenth-Eleventh century openwork, and Ninth-Tenth century Thomas Type A and Type 5 (Thomas 2001)), a pewter disc brooch, a Borre style disc brooch (Tenth century), an Anglo-Scandinavian bird brooch fragment (Eleventh century), a strap, and a composite nummular brooch based on Arabic dirham (Tenth century, **Fig.114**). Functional objects include a key, a casket mount, a suspension lug, two bridle pieces and a book mount (Eleventh century). Interestingly, no coinage has been recovered from north of the West Rudham road. This may indicate functional contrasts with evidence further to the south.

A final find from NHER 32133, which provides further insight into the character of occupation, is a hoard of lead and iron objects (found by detectorists but as yet unlocated, see **Fig. 115**). The hoard consists of two vessels (22cm and 26cm in diameter, the smaller vessel with an Iron handle), a possible lead ingot, a lead handle and an Iron ploughshare. This discovery is closely paralleled by a Tenth century find at Flixborough, Humberside, interpreted as an ironworker's hoard buried at a high status secular residence, which is characterised by reduced levels of artefact loss in comparison with the Middle Anglo-Saxon settlement (Loveluck, 2007b, 104-105). If this is also the case at West Rudham, then this find provides a possible explanation for the low circulation of Iron and lead noted in parts of Late Anglo-Saxon West Norfolk (see Chapter 3). Furthermore, this hoarding would have occurred at the same time that metalwork indicative of new Scandinavian influence was being lost at NHER 32133. Social transformations illustrated by emergent art styles might provide a context for the insecurities evidenced by the act of hoarding.

South of the north-south road, but still within the arbitrary WR 2 focus, recovered artefacts consist of personal and functional objects (NHER 30441) with, to the west, an Eleventh century brooch, two strap end fragments (one with ring and dot decoration), a Borre style disc brooch (Tenth century), a Ringerike strap end (Tenth-

Eleventh century), and a penny of Aethelred II minted in London (997-1003). To the east, functional metalwork dominates, comprising three bridle cheek-pieces (2 lozengiform and 1 circular), a strap end, and a box.

*NHER 41005/31868/36584/30842*

During the Late Anglo-Saxon period, finds start to be lost beyond the north-south road at the western extent of Rudham for the first time. For example, three hooked tags (NHER 30842), a Ringerike strap fragment (Eleventh century, NHER 41005) and a Thetford Ware sherd (NHER 31868). These artefacts add to the general impression of settlement expansion, although they do not themselves indicate concentrated activity foci.

As a conclusion to the detailed consideration of the Late Anglo-Saxon surface finds from West Rudham, it can be said that finds of the later Ninth and Tenth centuries are very well represented. A further interesting feature is the apparent functional difference between the northern focus (NHER 32133/30441, WR2), with a material culture profile indicative of a multifunctional settlement of some status, and the southern focus (NHER 30441/ 28130/28131/30611, WR 1), which contains rather more functional objects including horse furniture and coinage reflecting trade, exchange and higher status.

Further sub-surface investigation is required to establish how 'real' these apparent patterns are. However, it is interesting to note that, as with East Rudham, a strong Scandinavian or Anglo-Scandinavian element is indicated at NHER 32133. It is of further interest that hoarding, traditionally interpreted as a reflection of social insecurity, is occurring as new forms of personal metalwork are being consumed. These contrasting acts may indicate the interaction of contrasting social groups at a single settlement

## Material Culture Profile: Analysis of the Coinage and Metalwork Assemblages as a whole

**Fig. 116**

What follows is an attempt at a further comparison of the three hypothesised activity foci (ER, WR1 and WR2) to determine whether all three were multifunctional or whether specialised functions were distributed in the landscape and to speculate on the relationship between the settlement foci.

The metalwork loss profiles are similar in the Early Anglo-Saxon period (although quantities differ) dominated by personal metalwork and functional objects (such as shield mounts) that might indicate burials. In contrast, the Middle Anglo-Saxon metal loss patterns, suggest contrasting activity foci. In West Rudham, Middle Anglo-Saxon coin loss is restricted to West Rudham 1, indicating that market functions were located at this settlement, while East Rudham has a good proportion of coin loss and little functional metalwork, perhaps suggesting a more specialised site. In contrast, by the Late Anglo-Saxon period the two putative West Rudham foci have similar profiles of metalwork loss characterised by a full multifunctional range of coinage, personal and functional metalwork with horse equipment being lost for the first time.

If quantities of finds loss can be considered in any way meaningful, it might be argued that, as the multifunctional settlement at West Rudham 2 rose in prominence by the Late Saxon period, West Rudham 1 experienced decline although coin loss remained stable. This may indicate a separate Middle Anglo-Saxon market/ settlement (WR1) and a settlement (WR2) being replaced by a Late Anglo-Saxon multifunctional settlement, with a degree of market activity at both foci.

## Coinage Profile

**Fig. 117**

(*See site commentary above for detailed coin identification*).

In total, 16 Anglo-Saxon coins have been recovered from the Rudham environs. This assemblage is not exceptional in Norfolk although, for an inland site, Rudham was very well linked to continental trade and exchange networks, Frisian being particularly well represented between 680 and 730. In contrast, East Anglian coinage is somewhat restricted. This may suggest that exchange was not under strict regional economic control from an early date (see Chapter 3). As at a number of other sites, coins dating c. 750-900 are completely absent, although the presence of Late Anglo-Saxon ingots does suggest that transactions continued in the absence of money. However, the presence of an Arabic dirham and a Danelaw-issued St. Peter coin provides a little evidence for use of coins during the Tenth century. Indeed, the more abundant zones of later Anglo-Saxon coin loss (990-1050) at West Rudham demonstrate that overall settlement stability continued into the later medieval period.

Further insights come from comparing coin use between East and West Rudham (**Fig. 116**). Middle Anglo-Saxon coins, dating from 695-750, are divided evenly between the two parishes, with 4 coins from East Rudham and 4 coins from West Rudham. All 4 Middle Anglo-Saxon coins from East Rudham come from the 'productive' focus at NHER 30841, and are of East Anglian, national and Continental origin. In contrast, the coinage from West Rudham is split between the two foci WR1 (2 coins) and WR2 (1 coin), but, interestingly, is of exclusively Continental origin, which may indicate a difference in sphere of economic relations between East and West Rudham.

Late Anglo-Saxon coins are found almost exclusively in West Rudham, and are mainly later coins of Anglo-Saxon England (i.e. 990-1050), with only one earlier Late Anglo

Saxon coin from West Rudham (WR1). In contrast, the only Late Anglo-Saxon coin from East Rudham is an Arabic dirham (c.900-950) that may have arrived via Scandinavian controlled seaways. The coin evidence clearly indicates that the activity focus at West Rudham 1 is the main Late Anglo-Saxon focus of trade and exchange, although the increasingly coalesced surface artefact scatters indicate a complex site.

## Geophysical Survey: Interpreting functional Zones

**Fig. 119**

The abundant finds at NHER 28131/28130 (WR1), and the apparently linear loss patterns of a number of metal artefacts meant that this was an ideal site for further fieldwork. The crop regime did not allow for further intensive fieldwalking although, as **Fig. 118** shows, metal detectorists had previously identified some concentrations of pottery (Rogerson, pers comm.). Therefore, a geophysical survey (magnetometry) was undertaken to see if metal work or pottery scatters related to coherent elements of buried settlement morphology, such as boundary features.

A total area of 4 hectares was surveyed (3.12 hectares in NHER 28131 and 0.75 hectares in NHER 28130) using the methodology outlined in Chapter 4. This revealed a number of discrete anomalies, with contrasting magnetic responses ( +5.04 NT to -5.04 NT (NHER 28131) and +4.90 to -4.81 NT (NHER 28130)), discussed below.

**Results: NHER 28131**

**Fig. 120**

A series of interrupted positive anomalies were observed on a north-south alignment over a distance of c.200m towards the western limit of the surveyed area

(**1**). The features had a typical length, before interruption, of c.35-40m, with an average width of c.3m, and are best interpreted as ditched features possibly relating to a routeway. This would provide a context for some of the Middle Anglo-Saxon finds lost in a linear pattern in NHER 28131. The putative routeway might be Roman or earlier in date but the anomalies do run parallel to the existing medieval road to the west. The interrupted anomalies might indicate cutting and re-cutting of new routeway ditches on slightly different alignments resulting in contrasting magnetic properties. However, the features are partially obscured by anomalies (**2**) and (**4**), and require further sub-surface investigation.

The only other anomalies with morphologies that may indicate boundary features of some antiquity were towards the northern end of the surveyed area. Two features, consisting of a WNW-ESEarm (c. 17m in length and 2m in width) abutting, at right angles, to a NNE-SSW arm (20m in length and 2m in width) were identified (**5**) and are tentatively interpreted as the southern and eastern sides of further small enclosures. It is possible that the western and northern sides of the original enclosures have been ploughed away.

North of the possible enclosures (**5**), two discrete positive/negative features (c. 7-8m in diameter) were identified. Their interpretation is far from certain but it is possible that these features represent buried kiln or hearth-type features of an uncertain date. With the additional presence of enclosures (**5**), it is possible that a zone of industrial activity has been identified adjacent to the possible routeway (**1**). However, further sub-surface investigation would be required to establish a date for these features.

Within the centre-west of NHER 28131, two (or possibly three) sides of what seems to be a square enclosure were observed, as an anomaly 2m wide with projected dimensions of c.50m squared (**2**). The relationship between this feature and the supposed routeway (**1**) is uncertain, although the enclosure (**2**) might be a later. A mixture of positive and negative readings may indicate the presence of both sub-surface ditched features and ploughed-out banked or rubble features. Enclosure (**2**)

is of similar morphology to a post medieval housing plot immediately beyond the western extent of the surveyed area and concentrated post-medieval rubble was also observed here, making the interpretation of a post-medieval plot most likely. However, the quantity of Roman and Anglo-Saxon finds within this part of NHER 28131 means that further sub-surface investigation is required to resolve this question.

Within the southern half of NHER 28131, two northeast to southwest aligned positive anomalies have been observed (**3**), c. 2m in width, running over a distance of c.20m. Although these are far from clear, their alignment, linking the present-day School Road (the southern edge of common land) to the hamlet of Pockthorpe might indicate a disused droveway or routeway. The antiquity of this feature is far from certain.

Within the south, west and eastern parts of the surveyed area a number of amorphous but very strong positive anomalies were observed (**4**). These areas seem to reflect patches of buried rubble and probably relate to post-medieval occupation within the hamlet of Pockthorpe and at School Farm in West Rudham. The westernmost area of rubble could feasibly relate to the use of enclosure (**2**). A number of faint positive anomalies run across the survey area on a northeast to southwest alignment. The most prominent of these coincides with a modern pathway between Pockthorpe and School Road (**7**) suggesting a modern date.

**Results: NHER 28130**

**Fig. 121**

On slightly elevated ground towards the centre-north of the surveyed area, a positive sub-circular anomaly (**3**), indicative of a ditched enclosure with an open western side (c. 20m in diameter and c.2m in width) was observed. This possible enclosure appeared to contain a smaller internal sub-circular feature, also likely to

be a ditched enclosure (c.10m in diameter with an open southern side). The date and function of these anomalies is unknown, but they appear similar to prehistoric ring-ditches which are indicative of ploughed-out barrows (see Burnham (Chapter 8), or Harford Farm, Norwich (Penn, 2000)).

Another possible sub-circular ring ditch (**4**) was observed as a positive anomaly approximately 100m west of feature (**3**). This anomaly, c.14m in diameter, with a ditch c.2m wide, does not appear to have an opening. Instead, a small, apparently sub-rectangular annex was observed at the western edge of the feature. Ten metres further west, another sub-circular feature was observed (**5**). This feature was quite a weak anomaly and appeared to consist of two opposing circuits, roughly 20m in length. As with anomaly (**3**), the date and function of anomalies (**4**) and (**5**) is unknown, but morphologically they resemble prehistoric ring-ditches.

It is not impossible that anomalies (**3**), (**4**) and (**6**) (see below) provide some landscape context for the important Early Anglo Saxon cemetery evidence located in NHER 28130 adjacent to St. Peter's Church. It is frequently the case that sites of prehistoric significance, such as barrows, were reused by pagan Anglo-Saxons (Lucy, 2000). However, future excavation would be required to ascertain the presence and date of these features.

Towards the eastern end of the surveyed area, two faint positive anomalies (**1**) were identified running on north-east to south-west, and north-west to south-east alignments respectively. The features appeared not to be contemporary, but no sequence was observed. The function of the anomalies is uncertain but they seem to represent ditched agricultural plot boundaries of uncertain date, sharing a common alignment and possibly a common function with enclosure (**5**) in NHER 28130. A northwest to southeast aligned positive anomaly (c.2m wide and c.43m long), at the western edge of the surveyed area might also represent a ditched agricultural plot boundary. The feature shares a common alignment with anomaly (**1**), but is of uncertain date and function.

Near the southwest edge of the eastern survey area, an irregular positive anomaly (**2**) (c.40m east-west by c.10m north-south) was observed to coincide with an area of abundant surface tile and rubble. This anomaly is interpreted as a large spread of post-medieval rubbish, possibly a ploughed-out manure heap. The 'rubbish spread' masked two further indistinct linear features of uncertain function and date (**2**) that ran on east-west and northwest-southeast alignments respectively.

In conclusion, the geophysical surveys in West Rudham have not demonstrated the number of coherent boundaries observed at other intensive case-study sites such as Congham, Burnham, Sedgeford or Wormegay. The survey has, however, shown some possible early routeways (NHER 28131, **1**) and these may provide some additional context for Anglo-Saxon activity in the area. The survey has also shown that the positioning of Early Anglo-Saxon cemeteries in NHER 28130 may be focussed around possible ring-ditches (**6** and **4**). On present evidence West Rudham seems to be a stable settlement, with the present day settlement foci perhaps obscuring the early medieval boundary features which would provide the best analytical context for the abundant surface finds, as postulated by Lewis (2007, 133-163).

## Late Anglo-Saxon and Medieval: Historical Background

Rudham is first attested to in Domesday Book (1086) and appears as a single entry. At Domesday (TRW) Rudham was largely held by William de Warenne (DB, 8, 107-109) who was one of the wealthiest beneficiaries of the Norman Conquest, holding land in twelve counties and building a number of castles, including Castle Acre castle (Hunt, 1899, 372-3).

The main entry shows that one, Ralph, held 3 carucates of land for De Warenne, which was held by Toki before 1066 (DB, 8, 107). This sizeable holding of 6 villagers, 16 smallholders, and a slave contained varied resources, including meadow (4 acres), 2 mills, a salt house, 11 cattle, 28 pigs, 180 sheep and 22 wild mares. This manor also had outliers at Bagthorpe (1 carucate, with 3 smallholders, 1 plough, 3 cattle, 4 pigs and 100 sheep), Houghton (1 carucate, with 1 plough, 4 pigs, 40 sheep), Barmer (1/2

a Church), Syderstone and Helhoughton (DB, 4, 17). All these outliers had freemen appertaining to them and Houghton had 13. Ralph's holdings in Rudham itself also had 25 freemen holding 1½ carucates of land and another freeman in Houghton with 30 acres and a church without land (DB, 8 108). Hart considers Ralph's estate to be the Brothercross hundredal centre (Hart, 1992, 79, Tab. 2.2a). In addition, smaller holdings in Rudham (TRW), all with freemen appertaining to them, included that of Lambert (1 carucate with an outlier in Syderstone, DB 8, 109) and Peter of Valognes (where a freeman Thorgils held ½ a carucate of land, DB 34, 11).

A number of observations can be made from the entry for Rudham in Domesday Book. Firstly, the six outlying estates to the central *soke* at the time of Domesday Book seem to indicate the early 'breaking-up' of a former large land unit (Pestell, 2004, 197). Continued fragmentation is possibly further indicated by the post-Domesday attributions of 'West' and 'East' (Pestell, 2003, 128). As supporting evidence for the tenurial complexity of Rudham, the high number of freemen is corroborated by the 'fifty two sokemen' who witnessed a charter of c.1140-70 contained in the Castle Acre cartulary (Pestell, 2004, 197, Douglas, 1927).

The fact that Rudham also had two Churches listed in Domesday holding only 60 acres between them further suggests the breaking down of a large early manorial unit (Pestell, 2003, 128). A third church without land listed under Houghton may represent a *chapel of ease* attached to one of the other Churches (Pestell, 2004, 197). At present, there are only two churches in the Rudhams : St. Peter's (NHER 28130) in West Rudham and St.Mary's (NHER 3645) in East Rudham – making the identification of the Domesday churches far from certain. However, the discovery of the cropmark of a large cruciform church c. 200m east of the present St.Mary's in 1992 (NHER 29031, **Fig . 110**) may resolve discrepancies between the Domesday entries and the available archaeological evidence.

The interpretation of the cropmark church at NHER 29031, and how this and the extant Rudham Churches relate to the Domesday entry is, however, a matter of some debate. The identified cropmark was originally interpreted as the site of the

first Augustinian priory of Coxford (Edwards, 1992). However, Davison (unpublished HER notes), similarly to Pestell, considers it more likely that the cropmark represents one of the two Rudham churches listed in Domesday. The basis of this argument is that the church listed under Houghton with no land (a parish contiguous with West Rudham) might actually be the church of St.Peter's, West Rudham, serving the numerous sokemen with holdings. This is corroborated by the fact that Houghton church has no features that are obviously pre-Conquest or Norman (Davison, 1988). An alternative suggestion is that the cropmark church at NHER 29031 represents an early priory founded in East Rudham (1135-54) by Wm Cheney and demolished when the institution was moved to Coxford in the Thirteenth century as indicated in the Coxford Cartulary (Saunders, 1910). Whatever the sequence of structures in East Rudham is, it certainly indicates a complex tenurial set-up with potentially competing ecclesiastical interest groups. Unfortunately, a reappraisal of early tithe maps did not add any evidence for the presence of early estate boundaries.

Large multi-*vill* estates, labelled 'multiple estates' by Jones (1976), such as Rudham (Pestell, 2003, 128) have long been recognized as a basic unit of exploitation in the early-medieval period (Hadley, 1996). However, there is some dispute as to whether, in the area of the Danelaw, large estates and *sokes* were a surviving feature of pre- or post-Viking administration, with estate fragmentation then occurring in the Tenth and Eleventh centuries (Oosthuizen 2005, Hadley, 1992). Two strands of evidence contained in the Rudham Domesday entry might be explored in relation to this question.

Firstly, it is sometimes suggested that a large number of freemen or sokemen, a socio-economic peculiarity particular to East Anglia (Darby, 1971), might well be a feature of Scandinavian influence (Hart, 1992, 231). It has been argued that, where there were opportunities for economic expansion away from the early residences of great landowners, for example at the Isle of Flegg in East Norfolk, free men predominate (Williamson and Skipper, 2005). Although the 'free' of Rudham are sokemen, it is worth considering this as a developmental model for Rudham, especially in the light of the potentially important Late Anglo Saxon occupation

phase, including Anglo-Scandinavian objects, cited above. Secondly, strong Scandinavian or Anglo-Scandinavian influence in the Rudham area is further corroborated by the fact that much of the land listed in Domesday is divided into *carucates*. It has been argued that the *carucate*, a popular land division used in the area of the Danelaw instead of *hide,* signifies the division of land by Scandinavian or Anglo-Scandinavian authority (Hadley, 2006, 84-88; Hart, 1992). However, although the presence of carucates may imply that Rudham was under the attention of Scandinavian administrators during the period of the Danelaw, it remains uncertain whether this would have impacted significantly on the development of the settlement itself.

# Chapter 8: Burnham

## Extensive Polygon Analysis: Early Anglo-Saxon

**Fig. 122**

The place name 'Burnham' comes from the Old English meaning 'village on a stream' (Ekwall, 1971). Place names ending in '–ham' are thought to date to very early in the Anglo-Saxon period, and are sometimes taken to indicate 'primary' areas of occupation (Penn, 1993, 36). The geographical area now under the place-name 'Burnham' incorporates five modern civil parishes: Burnhams Market, Norton, Overy, Thorpe and, on the coast, Deepdale. Each parish contains a present-day settlement focus. Burnham Market, the largest of the present settlements close to the 'productive' site (NHER 28127/18496), incorporates four further ecclesiastical parishes; the three former hamlets of Westgate, Ulph and Sutton, and Burnham St. Andrew (presently unlocated). This polyfocal settlement set-up, combined with plentiful agricultural land producing surface finds, makes Burnham an excellent case-study for extensive polygon analysis, and we can possibly distinguish between surface signatures relating to both Early Anglo-Saxon cemetery and settlement.

Surface finds indicate three probable Early Anglo-Saxon cemetery foci within the Burnham environs (Chester-Kadwell, 2009, 158-9). Two, dating to between the Fifth and Seventh century, are located around the later 'productive' site (**Fig. 127**). This has led to the suggestion that this was an important activity focus prior to the emergence of the 'market' focus at NHER 28127/18496 (Rogerson, 2003), considered in more detail below.

A third possible cemetery is located c. 500m to the south-west at NHER 32340/32951 (**Fig. 127**). Here a wide variety of artefacts dating from the Fifth to

Seventh centuries have been recovered. Unfortunately, only a limited number of artefacts have been accurately located but concentrated activity at the eastern end of NHER 32340 is indicated, perhaps reflecting the location of a ploughed-out prehistoric barrow re-used by an Early Anglo-Saxon community (a phenomenon noted by Lucy, 2000, 125, Fig. 5.1). Surface finds from NHER 32340 include cruciform brooches; at least six spearhead fragments, an iron shield ring, a knife, a re-used Roman coin, a ferrule, and some pot sherds (suggesting possible cremations or accessory vessels). Finds from NHER 32951 include four cruciform brooch fragments, a wrist clasp fragment, a small long brooch fragment, and a hooked fastener. Clearly, burials accompanied by weapons are indicated, and a degree of status is indicated by the additional recovery of a sword scabbard chape. It has been demonstrated that armament in Early Anglo-Saxon graves was a complex medium for expressing and promoting male identities and status within family, local communities and larger polities (Dickinson, 2005, 110, Stoodley, 1999, 136).

The chronological and social relationship between the burial focus at NHER 32340/32951 and the two other foci at NHER 28127/18496 is at present uncertain. However, it may be of significance that NHER 32340/3295 was abandoned while the other two sites, which are closer to potential contemporary settlement evidence at NHER 29185/25918/1737, continued to be occupied as the later 'productive' site.

In addition to the cemetery foci, a number of surface finds have been made on elevated ground to the north of Burnham Market, west of the northern extension of the River Burn and just south of the intertidal salt marsh flats. Artefacts include personal metalwork (brooch, strap fitting), functional metal objects (bucket, vessel, mould), pottery at NHER 25918, a brooch, girdle hanger, and pottery (possibly Iron Age in date, Lyons, 2004) at NHER 1737. An undated spindle whorl and a weight might also relate to Early Anglo-Saxon activity. Chester-Kadwell (2009, 158-159) has suggested that the surface finds at NHER 29185/25918/1737 are indicative of a settlement focus. This is the first tract of habitable land south of the North Sea coast and the use of this area as a first-choice zone of habitation is further evidenced by Iron Age and Roman surface finds. Present evidence indicates concentrated activity

at NHER 25918/29185, with NHER 1737 perhaps representing peripheral activity. However, until there is systematic work, a possible Early Anglo-Saxon burial focus cannot be completely ruled out.

A number of other individual artefacts of an Early Anglo-Saxon date have been recovered in the Burnham environs. At the west of Burnham Market parish, a fastening, a harness fitting (NHER 32087), and a brooch (NHER 32112) have been recovered during metal detecting. Nearer the north coast in Burnham Norton, a bow brooch has been recovered from the site of a Roman building (NHER 20343). Immediately west of the 'productive' site, pottery has been recovered at NHER 28117. This may represent a western extension of the NHER 28127 activity focus (see below). Possible Early Anglo-Saxon pottery was also recovered from excavations towards Burnham Sutton at NHER 21811.The most dispersed finds from the core activity foci occur east of the present settlement of Burnham Thorpe, where a brooch fragment (NHER 14271) and a strap end (NHER 41919) have been recovered, and to the extreme northeast in Burnham Overy, where possible Early Anglo-Saxon pottery has been recovered (NHER 36006).

It is uncertain what level of occupation these individual artefacts represent. Chester-Kadwell suggests that finds loss at NHER 32087 and NHER 32112, relate to activities associated with utilisation of the spring line (Chester-Kadwell, 2009, 158). It is also feasible that these artefacts are simply losses associated with movement through the landscape. Nevertheless, although little can be said about these objects they do give the impression of, if not intensive occupation, extensive human activity at this early date.

## Extensive Polygon Analysis and Previous Excavations: Middle Anglo-Saxon

**Fig. 123**

By the Middle Anglo-Saxon period we can see some fundamental changes in land-use in the Burnham environs, with concentrated activity increasingly focused at the main 'productive' site at NHER 18496/28127 (see below) and the cemetery focus at NHER 32340/32951 discontinued, implying a degree of settlement nucleation.

A number of artefacts representing activity of an uncertain nature have been recovered towards the west of the study area in Burnham Market parish and around the spring line. Finds include individual brooches (NHER 41977, NHER 44627, NHER 32087), strap fittings (NHER 32087, NHER 29780) and a single coin (a Series D *sceatta* minted in Domburg, c.700-715, Abramson, 2006, 10) from the southern extent of activity (NHER 35847). These finds might have been lost during movement through the landscape as the southern stretch of the main road through Burnham Market passes through this area heading towards North and South Creake. Agricultural boundaries abutting this road suggest a routeway of some antiquity (Hesse, 1992). The coin find indicates that the coin carrying population was not exclusively restricted to the 'productive' site.

In addition to these stray finds, Middle Anglo-Saxon activity is indicated at three other locations.

*Burnham Norton*

Surface finds of Middle Anglo-Saxon Ipswich Ware have been recovered in Burnham Norton parish (NHER 1737, NHER 1756, NHER 25918, and NHER 34280). These finds are less concentrated than the Early Anglo-Saxon material from the same location, and it is uncertain if a continuation of the earlier site is indicated. This activity focus is apparently discontinuous with the 'productive' site to the south. Given the relative lack of metalwork (a strap fitting and a gold finger ring, NHER 29185) these finds may represent cultivated land away from core habitation areas.

*Burnham Thorpe*

Middle Anglo-Saxon surface finds, including a strap end (NHER 41919), a caterpillar brooch (NHER 21446) and a rare piece of imported Bornheim Waldorf pottery (NHER 27741) have been found near the present settlement of Burnham Thorpe, 2km south of the 'productive' site. The proximity of the 'productive' site probably explains the presence of imported pottery but this 'site' is certainly a separate activity focus.

*Burnham Market / Burnham Sutton: Previous excavations*

At Ulph Place, Burnham Market (NHER 34581) trial trenches in advance of re-development, west of the 'productive' site, were able to trace the northern extent of an 'Anglo-Saxon' waterfront (Penn, 1999, 1). A Middle Anglo-Saxon deposit was sealed by a Twelfth century freshwater flood event indicating that the site had been left unoccupied or abandoned by this time (*ibid*). This is of further interest given the sequence of occupation observed at the 'productive' site, NHER18496/ 28117.

At the southern side of Burnham Market towards Burnham Sutton, sizeable excavations were carried out in 1997 (4 hectares) at Creake Road (NHER 32791), on the 10m contour south of the Goose Beck. The excavations revealed a complex sequence of ditches interpreted as agricultural boundaries (but possibly also later street plots) relating to at least three phases of intensive land-use within a rectangular plot of suspected Medieval or earlier origins (**Fig. 124**).

The first phase of boundary features were north-south to east-west aligned co-axial enclosure ditches interpreted as infields (Percival, Unpublished). Both Roman pottery and Middle Anglo-Saxon pottery (Ipswich Ware, 62 sherds) were recovered from these features perhaps indicating Roman features, re-used in the Middle Saxon period (Percival and Williamson, 2005, 82). Similar co-axial features have been identified at nearby North and South Creake as landscape features (Hesse, 1992, 305-324; Shelley, 1997, 566-588). Two Middle Saxon ovens, archaeo-magnetically dated to 600-980AD, were also excavated (Watkins, 2007, 4). Ephemeral settlement activity, consisting of eleven north-south aligned post-holes dated by Thetford Ware,

are also attributed to this phase of land use and truncate an earlier east-west aligned ditch feature (Crowson, 1997).

A second phase land-use, in the form of undated north-south aligned narrow 'strip fields' (6 or 7m in width) defined by slight ditches, was then apparently set-out on the north-south axis of the co-axial enclosures (Percival and Williamson, 2005, 82). In the third phase of land-use, these 'strip fields' were turned through ninety degrees, creating a pattern of regularly spaced east-west boundaries similar to other field systems in the area (*ibid*). However, the fact that these were positioned at right angles to the Creake Road leads to the suggestion that these features are actually settlement plot boundaries of the Eleventh and Thirteenth centuries (Crowson, 1997, 9) and not 'strip fields'. A number of excavated pits were also recovered that may be also be attributable to this phase of land-use, indicating an intensity of land-use not readily associated with 'strip fields'.

The Creake Road excavations provide an insight into a dynamic settlement sequence in the Burnham environs, and it is clear that concentrated activity and perhaps habitation zones extended beyond the 6 hectares of the 'productive' site at NHER 18496/28127. However, throughout the occupation at Creake Road, material culture loss is restricted to animal bone, lava quern, slag and a chalk spindle whorl, there were no coins and few metal finds. This artefactual signature contrasts strongly with that from the 'productive' site, and has led to the suggestion that the Creake Road site relates to a completely separate activity focus (Rogerson, 2003, 115). Indeed, with its now ruined parish church of St. Ethelbert (NHER 1755), '*tun'* place name and surface finds of Middle/Late Anglo-Saxon and medieval pottery found south of the church (NHER 41918), there is some suggestion that the Creake Road site might represent the later expansion of Burnham Sutton away from the 'productive' site (Crowson, 1997).

Further investigation is clearly required to establish the true nature of artefact scatters at Burnhams Norton and Thorpe, and the extent of the settlement at Burnham Sutton. However, at this stage it can already be argued that, in addition to

the ‘productive’ site, the archaeological evidence indicates some form of polyfocal settlement set-up by the Middle Anglo-Saxon period in the Burnham environs. Intriguingly, given its importance at the time of Domesday (see below), no Middle Anglo-Saxon evidence has yet been recovered from Burnham Overy parish.

## Extensive Polygon Analysis: Late Anglo-Saxon and Medieval

**Fig. 125, Fig. 126**

At an extensive level Late Anglo-Saxon surface finds seems to demonstrate a number of continuities of occupation with the Middle Anglo-Saxon evidence. This set-up seems to persist through to the medieval period, although activity at the main ‘productive’ site (NHER 18496/28127) decreases. Yet, in addition to those areas already occupied during the Middle Anglo Saxon period, new areas of activity also emerge.

As with the Middle Anglo-Saxon occupation, stray finds representing activity of an uncertain nature have been recovered towards the west of the study area in Burnham Market parish around the spring line and Creake Road. Late Anglo-Saxon period finds include, north of the Creake Road, a strap end (NHER 44627), a coin (Edmund, 939-946), a harness, a strap fitting and a stirrup (NHER 32087/NHER 41977). South of the road, a brooch and a strap end (NHER 44627), a strap fitting (NHER 32112), and a stirrup and strap fitting (NHER 35847) have been recovered. Interestingly, many artefacts are horse-related and might indicate artefact loss during high–status secular activities such as hunting on an estate. The presence of coinage at NHER 32087 indicates that the coin carrying population was not exclusively restricted to the ‘productive’ site.

*Burnham Norton*

Late Anglo Saxon activity in Burnham Norton parish concentrates around the now isolated St Margaret's Church (NHER 1770) and comprises finds of Thetford Ware (NHER 40704, NHER 25918, NHER 1756, NHER 1737 and NHER 29185), a coin of Eadred (946-955), a strap fitting (NHER 25918), a high-status gold finger ring and a strap fitting (NHER 29185). These finds seems to reflect an area of settlement feasibly with Middle Anglo-Saxon origins (see above). The presence of the church perhaps offers a tentative window onto the character of the settlement. Additional finds loss away from the core activity zone, including a harness fitting (NHER 29624), pottery and a box (NHER 34280), may indicate the western and northern extent of this activity focus. Pottery from further north (NHER 20343) might relate to an unknown activity focus.

*Burnham Market/Sutton*

As mentioned above, in addition to the evidence from the Creake road excavations, Late Anglo-Saxon and Medieval pottery found south of the church (NHER 41918), suggests that Burnham Sutton may have been a Late Anglo Saxon expansion settlement away from the 'productive' site.

*Burnham Thorpe*

During the Late Anglo-Saxon period, there is increased activity around Burnham Thorpe. Thetford Ware pottery has been found c.2km southeast of the 'productive' site (NHER 37234, NHER 13771 and NHER 11739); a strap end has also been recovered (NHER 41919). This material seems to indicate the cultivation of agricultural land around an un-investigated focus represented by present-day Burnham Thorpe itself. Additional finds of Thetford Ware pottery between Burnham Thorpe and the 'productive' site (NHER 32951 and NHER 28578) may relate to either activity foci.

*Burnham Overy*

As with the preceding Middle Anglo-Saxon period, activity in Burnham Overy parish is not evident, although this might be a reflection of a lack of investigation as opposed to a genuine lack of occupation. Certainly, by the Twelfth century, there must have been some occupation in the parish, as the earliest fabric at St. Clement's Church (NHER 1741) dates, at the very latest, to that century (Jenkins, 2000).

Taken as a whole, the Late Anglo-Saxon surface evidence indicates polyfocal settlement in the Burnham environs that defies simplistic labelling. A continued expansion of settlement - perhaps into areas even further dispersed than that now indicated by surface artefact finds, such as Burnham Overy - is also implied from the complex later parochial/ecclesiastical structure attested to in Domesday Book (see below). Medieval evidence seems to continue the Late Anglo-Saxon pattern, although there was much more activity around Burnham Market and Burnham Norton (**Fig. 126**). Activity at Burnham Thorpe also expands, both in spatial extent and in terms of functional profile, reflecting a wealthy, stable subsidiary settlement. However, at this level of analysis, fundamental changes that might occur, such as Twelfth century transformations at the 'productive' site, are rendered invisible. In order to interpret these changes better we must now look in more detail at this activity focus.

## Material culture profile and settlement morphology, integrated Fieldwork at NHER 18496 and NHER 28127

**Fig. 128**

The 'productive' site originally highlighted by Rogerson (2003) at NHER 18496 and NHER 28127 was subjected to detailed plotting of metal finds, fieldwalking and geophysical survey (magnetometry), using the methodologies outlined in Chapter 4, in order to explore both site morphology and material culture profile. In addition, an important unpublished auger survey result (Godwin, 2003) is presented here for the first time.

**Auger Survey: Interpreting Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon functional zones**

An auger survey undertaken on the north and south sides of the Goose Beck showed that land west of the River Burn has a basal geology of chalk (which outcrops at c. 3m AOD in places) overlaid by gravel banks and then alluvium in the relatively narrow valley flood plain (Godwin, 2003). South of the Beck, the auger transect demonstrated a relatively shallow-drop-off of underlying chalk. North of the Beck, however, as **Fig. 128** extrapolates, a sharp drop off in the underlying chalk indicates the ideal site for a harbour or landing place. Here, low-lying alluvial deposits on top of gravel provided a radiocarbon date of AD 310 +/- 50, suggesting that preconditions for a suitable harbour were in place as early as the Fourth century AD (Godwin, 2003). This is corroborated on a regional basis by sediment studies indicating that local sea levels were as much as half a metre higher around c.400 AD (Funnell and Boomer, 1998) and, although Godwin postulates a drop in relative sea level by the Late Anglo-Saxon period, this probably made shipping possible on a navigable river Burn throughout the Anglo-Saxon period (Godwin, 2003).

**South of the beck: Interpreting functional zones and material culture profile at NHER 28127**

NHER 28127 is a field roughly four and a half hectares in size, that slopes moderately from south to north. The northern edge of the field borders pasture fringing the south side of the east-west aligned Goose Beck. The underlying geology is sand and gravel.

**Metal detector and other surface finds**

*Early Anglo-Saxon Finds*

**Fig. 127**

There are a number of accurately located Early Anglo-Saxon metal detector finds from NHER 28127. This allows for a tentative reconstruction of areas of concentrated activity even though finds are not as abundant as those from NHER 18496. As noted above, finds indicate a strong funerary element (Rogerson, 2003, Chester-Kadwell, 2009, 158-9).

Plotting all located metal finds indicates two loose concentrations of artefact loss: one in the central portion of the field and another towards the western end close to the present waterline. Artefacts lost within the central zone include girdle hangers (2), cruciform brooch fragments (2) and a Seventh century disc brooch, while artefacts from the western concentration include a cruciform brooch and fragment, a small-long brooch headplate, a radiate brooch fragment, and a mount with bird-head ornament. Early Anglo-Saxon artefacts not closely located but certainly from NHER 28127 include a girdle hanger, tweezers and a buckle.

The distribution of artefacts may well relate to burial activity around a number of prehistoric barrows (see below). Interestingly, diagnostic material dates exclusively to the Seventh century, and some chronological distinction between this material and that from NHER 18496 might therefore be tentatively implied. The cemetery related artefact scatter to the southeast at NHER 32340 also hugs the present waterline, although a relationship between the two observed artefact scatters is uncertain. As there are no artefacts from NHER 28127 that need not be cemetery related, this may imply little functional continuity between the Early Anglo-Saxon and Middle Anglo-Saxon activity here.

*Middle Anglo Saxon finds*

**Fig. 128**

Middle Anglo-Saxon metalwork loss in NHER 28127 is noticeably reduced. Located artefacts are restricted to two Ansate brooches and a pin with a facetted head towards the western half of NHER 28127. Unlocated artefacts include a brooch, a

furniture fitting, tweezers and Ipswich Ware pottery, indicating an unspectacular zone of Middle Anglo-Saxon settlement. A complete absence of Middle Anglo-Saxon coin loss contrasts spectacularly with the evidence from NHER 18496, north of the Goose Beck. Interestingly, however, early fieldwalking did recover imported Middle Anglo-Saxon pottery, including several Rhinish/Frankish sherds and a strap handle of North French Blackware (Smallwood, 1983), towards the southern extent of the field ( Smallwood, pers comm.). On this basis further fieldwalking was undertaken (see below).

*Late Anglo-Saxon finds*

**Fig. 128**

In contrast to the weak Middle Anglo-Saxon metalwork signature, there are rather more Late Anglo-Saxon finds, with located dating artefacts almost exclusively to the Tenth century. The proportionally abundant Tenth century findspots are highly significant given that, on a regional basis, the circulation of non-ferrous material is weak at this time (see Chapter 3). No obvious concentrations of metal finds were noted, although a loose cluster of finds might be suggested towards the centre-north of the field, where pottery finds were also found to be abundant (see below).

Located metalwork consists of - from west to east - a Tenth century Viking disc brooch, two Tenth century openwork strap ends, a Tenth century Jellinge-style Viking disc brooch, a Tenth century Trefoil brooch, a Tenth century Viking Borre – style brooch and a Borre derived disc brooch. Interestingly, the Borre-style brooch is a *Scandinavian*, as opposed to an Anglo-Scandinavian, object as indicated by its convex profile and third attachment point lug(Hadley, 2006, 120, and **Fig. 129**). Furthermore, the other disc brooch, the Borre style brooch and the Trefoil brooch are all artefacts that have, in the past, been associated with Scandinavian, as opposed to Anglo-Scandinavian, activity (Pestell, 2005, 36). In contrast the Borre derived brooch indicates a merging of Scandinavian into Anglo-Scandinavian artwork and, therefore, the possibility of complex and transforming social identities at Tenth

century Burnham. Other unlocated artefacts from the site include a buckle, a finger ring, tweezers and a vessel.

On the basis of the metal artefact finds alone, a phase of Scandinavian influenced activity during the Tenth century might be suggested at NHER 28127. Further evidence of possible Scandinavian activity is evidenced by the sole Late Anglo-Saxon coin find, a Samanid Arabic dirham of Ahmad II Ismail, dated to 912-13. These coins may have arrived in Anglo-Saxon England via Scandinavian territories, where they were used in far greater numbers (Metcalf, 2007, 9). This find, in conjunction with ingots recovered from NHER 18496, remind us of the likelihood of a continuance of trade and exchange activities when coin finds are less abundant.

**Fieldwalking**

**Fig. 131**

Intensive fieldwalking recovered pottery dating from the Bronze Age through to the later medieval period. The small amount of Prehistoric and Roman material recovered does not indicate concentrated activity, although the Bronze Age sherd may be associated with the eastern of the three prehistoric barrows identified here by air photographic survey (NHER1020). Similarly, medieval pottery, both unglazed (Eleventh-Thirteenth centuries) and glazed (Thirteenth-Fifteenth centuries), indicates the cultivation of fields but no concentrated activity (not depicted on **Fig. 131**).

In contrast, notable scatters of Early to Late Anglo-Saxon pottery were recovered, consisting of 25 sherds of Early/Middle Saxon handmade pottery, 26 sherds of Middle Saxon Ipswich Ware and 37 Late Anglo-Saxon sherds. No further Middle Anglo-Saxon continental imported pottery was identified, although Late Anglo-Saxon St. Neots and Stamford Ware (Lincolnshire) and Middle Anglo-Saxon Ipswich Ware (Suffolk) provide evidence for regional trade/exchange. The recovery of decorated

Early Anglo-Saxon pottery is especially significant as this material is extremely rare (**Fig. 130**).

The distributions of Early Anglo-Saxon and Middle Anglo-Saxon pottery (mostly Ipswich Ware) were similar, suggesting either that the extent of land-use did not change greatly in the Seventh century or that the hand-built ware tends to date to the Middle Anglo-Saxon period. The Early and Middle Anglo-Saxon pottery was identified in two main concentrations; one in the western third of the surveyed area, and second, much less distinct, scatter in the eastern third of the surveyed area. The main concentration, particularly well defined by the Ipswich Ware pottery, appeared not to extend to the extreme west or south of the surveyed area, suggesting that the limit of the scatter had been observed. This seems to support Rogerson's (2003) supposition that the excavated material at Creake road (NHER 32791) belongs to a separate activity focus.

The distribution of Late Anglo-Saxon pottery in NHER28127 largely corresponds with that of the Early-Middle Anglo-Saxon material but is slightly shifted towards the centre-north of the surveyed area. There is a particular concentration of Late Anglo-Saxon pottery at the north-east of this zone, where the land starts to flatten out towards the waterfront of the Goose Beck. The main concentration of Late Anglo-Saxon pottery did not extend into the western, southern or eastern edges of the surveyed area, suggesting that three sides of the artefact scatter had been observed. A similar 'halo' effect to that observed in the Early and Middle Anglo-Saxon artefact scatter was also identified at the eastern extent of the surveyed area, perhaps reflecting in-field manuring subsidiary to the main area of occupation (Bintliff, 2000). The most concentrated area of Late Anglo-Saxon pottery coincided with a surface spread of dark soil (high organic content) that contained abundant inclusions of oyster shell. Similar concentrations of shell have been observed by the author at Sedgeford, and by Rogerson at Wormegay (Rogerson pers comm.). It is postulated that this surface signature indicates ploughed-out Saxon surface middens, as identified during excavation at Flixborough, Humberside (Loveluck, 2007b, 70-72).

**Geophysics**

**Fig. 132, Fig. 133**

The geophysical survey (magnetometry) at NHER 28127 covered an area of 3.5 hectares which, although not obtaining as clear a set of anomalies (max. +6NT to -4NT) as at NHER 18496 (perhaps due to colluvial soil coverage in the northern half of the field), was nevertheless hugely successful in identifying a number of important archaeological features. Combining the geophysics and fieldwalking results allows for further interpretative observations to be made (**Fig. 134**).

Four prehistoric barrows were identified (**1-4**). Three of these features correspond to previously identified cropmark features (NHER1020). The central barrow features two superimposed ditches and internal activity. It has been suggested that up to a quarter of all known Early Anglo-Saxon burial sites have spatial relationships with ancient monuments (Williams, 1998, 2006) and that many of these are Bronze Age round barrows (Lucy, 2000, 124). This seems likely at NHER 28127.

A number of discrete anomalies (approximately 2m in diameter) were identified towards the west of the survey area (unnumbered, see **Fig. 133**). Some of the anomalies were identified close to findspots of Early Anglo-Saxon pottery suggesting that these features might indicate the pits of sunken featured buildings infilled with charcoal rich or burnt material. However, caution must be exercised as buried iron objects can sometimes produce similar anomalies.

In the central third of the surveyed area, in close correspondence with the main pottery distributions, a positive anomaly that might represent a large enclosure ditch was identified (**5**), extending north of the surveyed area. Towards the eastern extent of the feature there may be an internal boundary (**6**). The date of boundary (**5**) is uncertain, but a Mid-Late Anglo-Saxon date is suggested because of the close spatial correspondence between it and the pottery scatters. No obvious re-cutting or replanning of this feature was evident. A further positive anomaly, possibly

indicative of a double-ditched drove or trackway (**7**) was apparently truncated by the eastern arm of the putative Late Saxon enclosure (**5**). However, it is felt that this feature is also likely to be broadly associated with the large enclosure.

At the extreme eastern extent of the surveyed area a possible curved boundary with a small square annex was identified as moderate positive anomalies (**8**). The date and function of this feature is uncertain but it should be noted that Early Anglo-Saxon artefactual material is abundant in this part of the site.

Running north-west to south-east at the eastern end of the survey area a modern service was observed (Unnumbered, **Fig. 133**). In the central south of the survey area a number of north-south aligned features were observed and are interpreted as the sub-surface remnants of Medieval or later ridge and furrow/strip field cultivation (Unnumbered, **Fig. 133**). A set of weak north-east to south-west aligned co-axial linear anomalies may represent post medieval field boundaries (**9**), their relationship with possible enclosure (**8**) is uncertain.

In the north-western third of the field a number of regularly spaced (c. 5-10m apart) north-east to south-west aligned positive linear anomalies were identified, apparently linked by short east-west aligned linear features (Unnumbered, **Fig. 133**). These are probably natural geomorphological features relating to the phenomenon of 'patterned ground' (Hibbet, 2008, 5). However, the features are morphologically very similar to the probable Anglo- Saxon co-axial boundaries identified at Creake Road (Percival, unpublished), and it is not impossible that some of the features are man-made. As they abut the wet-fringing area, it is not impossible that these features may define staithe-like plots, similar to features identified during recent excavations at Ely (Cessford et al. 2006) or still extant at the nearby village of Brancaster. However, in advance of sub-surface investigation these features cannot presently be added to the final interpretation.

**North of the beck: Interpreting functional zones and material culture profile at NHER 18496.**

NHER 18496 is a field roughly three hectares in size that slopes almost imperceptibly from north to south. The southern side of the field borders wet fringing areas on the north side of the east-west aligned Goose Beck. The underlying geology is sand.

**Metal detector and other surface finds**

*Early Anglo-Saxon Finds*

**Fig. 127**

As with NHER 28127, a number of accurately located Early Anglo-Saxon metal detector finds allows for a tentative reconstruction of activity zones in NHER 18496, again with a strong funerary element. Located metal artefacts indicate a strong concentration of activity towards the western extent of NHER 18496. Artefacts within this zone (c. 40m in diameter) include cruciform brooches (4), a Sixth century S-shaped brooch, a wedge shaped pendant, a triangular mount, a Fifth century saucer brooch and a Seventh century oval buckle. The distribution of artefacts is very similar to those associated with a re-used prehistoric barrow subsequently ploughed-out at Sedgeford (**Fig. 141**), although the geophysical survey could not confirm this. However, the chronological variation (Fifth-Seventh seventh century) within this apparent concentration of material suggests that, in actual fact, we might be looking at less concentrated activity over a long period of time.

Other located finds in NHER 18496 seem to be lost along the putative Anglo-Saxon waterfront, although it is uncertain if this pattern of artefact-loss is genuine or a product of post-depositional processes. These finds, from southwest to northeast, include a button brooch, a wrist clasp, an equal arm brooch, three brooch fragments (including two cruciform) and three small long brooches; all the artefacts could

relate to burial activity. The only find more readily associated with settlement related activities is a lead matrix trial piece found to the southwest of the main clusters of finds in NHER 18496. On present evidence, the more likely candidate for the Early Anglo-Saxon settlement focus lies northwest towards the coast (NHER 25918). Unlocated artefacts from NHER 18496 include a bow brooch, a girdle hanger, a plate brooch and a razor.

There is at present little evidence for functional continuity between the Early Anglo-Saxon and Middle Anglo-Saxon presence at NHER 18496. However, NHER 18496 was clearly a significant point in the Early Anglo-Saxon landscape (Roman pottery has also been recovered) and this might have drawn Middle Anglo-Saxon trade and exchange related activities to the site.

*Middle Anglo Saxon finds*

**Fig. 128**

In contrast to NHER 28127, and building on the abundant Early Anglo-Saxon metal finds, the Middle Anglo-Saxon metal finds from NHER 18496 are the most abundant in the entire Burnham environs. Furthermore, the strong coin element indicates an undoubted trade and exchange focus at the site.

In total, 17 coins have been recovered (eight accurately located coins and nine unlocated coins). The eight located coins are spread throughout the field, although there is a weak cluster towards its western extent. The northern extent of coin loss appears to be bounded by the putative Anglo-Saxon waterfront. The Middle Anglo-Saxon coin assemblage has a date range of 670-840 (Rogerson, 2003). The closely located coins consists of seven *sceattas* (a Series BII (c.700-710), a continental Series E (700-705), two East Anglian Series R (730-50 and 710-60), a continental Series E (710-730), a continental Series F (c. 695-705), and a Series C, Kent (c.700-710)), and a denier Louis the Pious (822-40) which might have arrived at the site via Scandinavian controlled seaways (Storey, 2003, 254-255). The nine unlocated coins are all *sceattas*

(an early Series Va BII (670-680), a Series R (710-60), a Series E (715-735), a Series F (695-705 x 2), a Series K (720-40), a Series QIII (725-745), and two Saltire-standards (710-735). Clearly, the assemblage indicates a significant focus of local, regional and continental trade and exchange activity throughout the Middle Anglo-Saxon period, and is second only to Bawsey in terms of a single concentrated area of Middle Anglo-Saxon coin loss in West Norfolk.

Other Middle Anglo-Saxon metalwork was also lost in equal abundance. Located findspots, with a notably waterfront/western emphasis, include - from west to east – two pins, three strap ends (one silvered and dated to the Ninth century), a hooked tag, an Ansate brooch, a Ninth century disc brooch, a strap end, a pin with a biconical head, and two further strap ends.

Away from the main concentration of finds, artefacts are also lost in a discrete area towards Burnham Overy, north of the east-west aligned road that runs through present day Burnham Market. Located finds here include a Ninth-Tenth century lead weight, a Ninth-Tenth century sword chape and a pin. These artefacts presumably represent the northern extent of the main activity focus. Unlocated finds from the site include a bow brooch, a buckle, a pendant, a scabbard, a sword, tweezers, a stamp and two weights. Undated metal working debris has also been recovered, although this may not necessarily relate to Anglo-Saxon production related activities.

From the evidence of metal finds alone the Middle Anglo-Saxon activity focus at NHER 18496 seems to represent a multi-functional, probably permanent, settlement focus featuring an important trade and exchange element. Artefacts such as sword chapes, swords and a scabbard indicate a high status presence. The distribution of located artefacts suggests intense utilisation of the waterfront area of the site.

*Late Anglo-Saxon finds*

**Fig. 128**

In contrast to NHER 28127, finds-loss during the Late Anglo-Saxon period is markedly reduced in NHER 18496. For example, coin loss is restricted to a single coin of Edward the Elder (899-924) towards the west of the field.

Located metalwork findspots, concentrated in a discrete area at the northwest end of the field, are restricted to a Tenth century strap end, a Ninth century Borre style brooch and a silver sheet fragment with Winchester style ornamentation. A single lead disc brooch is located north of the east-west aligned road towards Burnham Overy. Other unlocated finds include a copper alloy ingot, three weights, an iron knife and tweezers.

On the present evidence of metal finds, activity at NHER 18496 seems to go into a sharp decline in the Late Anglo Saxon period. However, the range of metal detector finds does still indicate a multi-functional activity focus, although with activity perhaps ending in the Tenth century, and with limited evidence for trade and exchange.

**Fieldwalking**

The agricultural regime meant that fieldwalking was not possible NHER 18496. However, in addition to Romano-British building debris at the northern extent of the field, earlier *ad hoc* reporting of finds by metal detectorists indicates findspots of both Early and Middle Anglo Saxon pottery towards the western end of the field. To date, no sherds of imported pottery have been noted.

**Geophysics**

**Fig. 132, Fig. 135**

The geophysical survey (magnetometry) at site NHER 18496 covered an area of 2.5 hectares, and obtained a very clear set of anomalies (with a NT range of +533 to -95),

indicating a number of important archaeological features. As it was impossible to fieldwalk this site, the interpretation of the date of the identified anomalies is somewhat conjectural, and a Roman date for some features cannot be completely excluded.

The survey identified a series of NNE-SSW and WSW-ENE aligned (and analytically cohesive) anomalies (**Fig.136**) interpreted as ditched field boundaries, diagnostic of a substantial rectilinear settlement (**1**). The concentrated anomalies appear to extend beyond the north of the survey area, but do not extend to the far west. At the south of the surveyed area further anomalies may be masked by potentially deeper overlying deposits. Importantly, a number of possible boundary ditches offer a strong positive survey signal, suggesting that they are filled with large quantities of dumped burnt waste (**6**). At Sedgeford similar anomalies, upon excavation, produced artefact and ecofact-rich Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon deposits, suggesting that NHER 18496 has excellent future research potential.

Upon first inspection, the layout of the ditch systems appeared to indicate a single phase, planned entity. However, upon closer inspection a number of observed elements indicate the possibility of superimposed enclosures. Firstly, there are a set of anomalies that appear to run on a north-east to south-west axis at the eastern extent of the site (**2**). These features represent a phase of apparently less intensive land-use and clearly do not belong to the same phase of land use as the more obvious of the rectilinear anomalies. Dating is conjectural, but as these anomalies align to the main east-west road that runs westwards towards present-day Burnham Market they may represent a set of Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon enclosures.

Secondly, further evidence for the presence of multiple phases of land use is evidenced by a major zone of intense boundary features towards the western limit of the site, corresponding with an area of abundant artefact loss (**3**). These anomalies are interpreted as ditches defining areas of either animal penning or enclosed habitation areas (post-hole buildings are unlikely to have been identified due to their ephemeral nature), and are likely to be Anglo-Saxon in date. This area

also features apparent micro-variations of enclosure alignment at key linking points, suggesting that there might be a degree of organic planning and superimposition of enclosures within a wider area of land-use that otherwise remains more static. The abundance of Early-Anglo Saxon metalwork in this area means that an identified sub-circular feature (**4**) could, just possibly represent the remains of a barrow ditch.

Without sub-surface investigation, dating and interpretation of the settlement (**1**) must remain conjectural, but the overall layout of the site is extremely similar to other Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon rectilinear settlements, for example Cottenham, Cambridgeshire (Mortimer, 2000). At this site, three phases of boundaries occurred during occupation dating from the Eighth to the Eleventh centuries. Reynolds (2003, 123) has compared this site to excavated estate centres with manorial foci at Chalton Manor Farm and Bishops Waltham, Hampshire.

In the north-east corner of the surveyed area, a strong positive anomaly indicative of the remains of a kiln was identified (**5**). Industrial zones are frequently located towards the periphery of settlement foci, perhaps indicating that at some point, this area was on the outskirts of the habitation zones. This feature, if Anglo-Saxon in date, could represent the first tangible evidence for production related activities recovered from the 'productive' site.

## Coinage and Metalwork Profile: North and South of the Beck compared

Considered as a whole, the coin assemblage from Burnham can also provide us with some important insights (**Fig. 137**). In total, 18 Middle Anglo-Saxon and 4 Late Anglo-Saxon coins have been recovered from the Burnham environs, of this assemblage 17 Middle Anglo-Saxon and 2 Late Anglo-Saxon coins come from the 'productive' focus. The chronological loss pattern mirrors quite closely the Norfolk average (Chapter 3, **Fig. 30**), perhaps suggesting that Burnham was quite sensitive to wider changes in the rhythm of the Anglo-Saxon economy of East Anglia. Interestingly for such a prominent coastal location, there is proportionally far less Middle Anglo-Saxon continental coinage than, for example, a relatively inland site such as Rudham.

Perhaps this reflects a deliberate choice of coastal trade and exchange networks east to Ipswich and, later, west to the Kings Lynn area and Lincolnshire, as evidenced by the presence of Ipswich Ware, and later Stamford and St. Neots Wares.

As at many other sites there is a virtual end to coin loss during the period c. 760-870, although the additional evidence of ingots and weights indicates some continuation of trade and exchange activities during this phase. The recovery of a denier of Louis the Pious (822-40), as at Wormegay, raises questions about the transformation of exchange networks during this time (Storey, 2003, 254-255). Slightly later, the recovery of an Arabic dirham (900-930) also signals some fundamental economic transformations at Burnham, with Scandinavian influences now prominent (Blackburn, 2007).

The final three coins in the Burnham assemblage form a very interesting collection. In addition to signifying a dispersed coin-using population amongst the various settlement foci in the Burnham environs (e.g. Burnham Norton, NHER 25918) they also demonstrate wider political transformations of the Tenth century. The first coin is of Edward the Elder (899-924), the Mercian son of Alfred the Great who led the West Saxon re-conquest of the Danelaw in 917 (Rogerson, 1998). The second coin is of his son, Eadmund (939-946), whilst the final coin is of Eadmund's son, Eadred (946-955). It seems possible that these coin finds, of the three successive post-Danelaw rulers of England and East Anglia, represent a final Anglo-Saxon *flourit* of economic activity in the Burnham environs.

An interesting feature of the site at Burnham is the differential pattern of coin and metalwork loss between the two main activity zones north (NHER 18496) and south (NHER 28127) of the Goose Beck. Following shared strong Early Anglo-Saxon artefact loss, NHER 18496 features strong Middle Anglo-Saxon finds loss and weak Late Anglo-Saxon loss, whilst NHER 28127 features weak Middle Anglo-Saxon finds loss and strong Late Anglo-Saxon finds loss. The contrasting finds-loss profiles are in further evidence if all located metal finds from north and south of the beck are divided into functional metalwork, personal metalwork and coinage categories (**Fig.**

**138**). North of the beck, abundant Middle Anglo-Saxon metal finds, with a heavy coinage presence but almost no functional objects, dwindles to only a few Late Saxon metal finds but with multiple functions represented. This perhaps suggests a transformation from a more specialised trade and exchange focus to a 'normal' settlement.

In contrast, south of the beck, Middle Anglo-Saxon metal finds are extremely infrequent, but Late Anglo-Saxon metal finds are abundant, multifunctional, almost exclusively diagnostic to the Tenth century, and with a strong Scandinavian element. This seems to indicate an unexceptional settlement focus that expands rapidly in the Tenth century. Although coin finds are largely absent here, this might be a reflection of the reduced quantities of coin in national circulation during the Tenth century (Blackburn 2003, 20-36 (esp. Fig. 3.4)) rather than a cessation of trade/exchange. The relationship between the final phase of Anglo-Saxon coin-use and the Tenth century 'Scandinavian' evidence at NHER 28127 is also extremely interesting, indicating either contemporary Scandinavian and Anglo-Saxon identities, or Anglo-Saxon coins that represent an end of 'Viking' activity.

## Late Anglo-Saxon and Medieval historical and archaeological background

Documentarily the earliest reference to the place name 'Burnham' is in Domesday Book (1086). The only named settlements are Deepdale, Thorpe and Overy, which already lay within two different administrative hundreds: Brothercross (Deepdale), and Gallow (Overy and Thorpe). In Norfolk, groups of commonly named parishes - presumably with a shared estate history - such as the Burnhams, seem to become truncated by later hundred boundaries, perhaps indicating the breakdown of larger early estates (Williamson, 1993, 128).

Williamson has suggested that the eight contiguous Burnham parishes might once have belonged to a single administrative unit of nearly 40 square kilometres (Williamson, 1993, 92), before being divided into several landholdings, perhaps

manorial units each with its own church (Crowson, 1997, 2, Ames 2003). For example, Williamson suggests that Burnham Sutton, the south *tun*, was a subsidiary settlement to the now deserted 'productive' site (Williamson, 1993, 93). The church in Burnham Sutton is dedicated to St Ethelbert, an East Anglian King martyred in 794 (Linnell 1962, 41), perhaps suggesting a Middle Anglo-Saxon foundation (Percival, Unpublished). If such an early church foundation occurs at a *subsidiary* settlement, it suggests a primary activity focus broken down into a 'multiple estate' (as defined by Jones, 1976) at a very early date. The 'productive' site at NHER 28127/NHER 18496 is situated at the point where four of the later civil parishes, Burnhams Market, Norton, Overy and Thorpe meet, implying fragmentation from this core (Rogerson, 2003, 114).

At Domesday, Burnham Deepdale was held by Roger Bigot, and a freeman under him held half a carucate (DB 9, 138). Thorpe was held by William De Warrenne (and by a Toki before the Conquest) and Robert of Verly (Godwin and later Ralph before); both estates are sizeable implying a prosperous settlement. De Warrenne's land included ten villagers, 29 smallholders, five men's ploughs, woodland for eight pigs, a 1/3$^{rd}$ of a mill, two cobs (now six), one ass, four cattle, 28 pigs, 345 sheep and nine freemen appertaining to the manor holding one carucate and two ploughs (DB 8, 105), and Robert of Verly's land is of similar scale, with five freemen. Four unnamed estates (DB, 8, 118. 9, 84; 136. 16,6. 23, 4) might equate to the other civil or ecclesiastical parishes, and include estates with freemen and smallholders, including a named freeman, Bondi, who held two carucates, woodland for eight pigs, a mill, a salt house and 100 sheep prior to the Conquest (DB, 16,6).

It is interesting that a 'Toki' and a 'Bondi' are listed as land owners prior to Domesday, as these names might both relate to Scandinavian individuals. In Yorkshire, the name *Toki* has been considered to reflect a direct 'Viking' influence (Fellows-Jensen, UD). This observation indicates a dynamic pattern of land ownership at the Burnhams with both Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian/Anglo-Scandinavian landholders. Of further interest is that in Old Norse '*bondi*' refers to a 'bound man' who held land in his own right but owed allegiance to a more powerful

chieftain (in many respects a parallel to the freeman) (Nicolle, 2003). An interesting speculation is that the name 'Bondi' refers to the landowner's status and not his actual personal name and this corruption might have been perpetuated by an Anglo-Saxon community in naming a Scandinavian incomer.

By far the largest manor at Domesday, of three carucates, was held by the King at Burnham Overy (held by an Ulf before Domesday) and included 20 (TRW16) smallholders, 12 (TRW eight) slaves, three ploughs (TRW two), woodland for four pigs, 21/2 mills, seven cobs, 40 pigs, 600 sheep, one salthouse and also an unnamed outlier of one carucate and one plough. A total of 30 freemen holding one carucate of land and two ploughs appertained to this manor, including a named freeman, Ketel (20 acres) and a freewoman, Oia (30 acres) (DB, 1, 147). This entry represents an important holding. Yet, as with Burnham Sutton, even though Burnham Overy is a significant estate, the place name, Overy, which translates as '*over the water'* (OE, Mills, 2003), again implies a subsidiary settlement. If this is the case, Overy's importance by Domesday also argues the case for an early fragmentation of an important multiple estate. An attached church is not mentioned in Domesday Book at Burnham Overy, however, the present church may originate in the Eleventh century as an aisleless cruciform building (Pevsner and Wilson, 1999, 231-2). The dedication of the church at Burnham Overy is St. Clement, a Scandinavian saint, this usually occurs in an urban context, often on crossroads (Ayers, pers comm.).

Other ecclesiastical buildings further demonstrate the early tenurial complexity in the Burnham environs. For example, in Burnham Market there were four churches by the Twelfth century; St. Andrew's (NHER 1753), St. Edmund's (NHER 1752), St. Ethelbert's (now Burnham Sutton, NHER 1755) and All Saints' (NHER 1759). Burnham Norton also has a now isolated church, St Margaret's (NHER 1770), with a Late Anglo-Saxon round tower, situated on a hill overlooking Burnham Market. Slightly later, the first Carmelite friary to be founded in Norfolk (NHER 1738), was set-up in the south of the parish. Burnham Thorpe also had two later medieval churches.

Given the importance of the Domesday estate at Burnham Overy, it is interesting that an Augustinian priory was founded here in 1200 (Pestell, 2003, 127). Pestell has suggested that religious institutions, such as priories, often seem to be founded close to important sites and wondered whether this indicated an earlier religious significance for the 'productive sites' and a continuity of sanctity (Pestell, 2004, 198). However, as Pestell himself notes, this argument seems to argue against the traditional viewpoint that the Vikings terminated the existence of many religious communities (*ibid*). An alternative view is that these sites were simply obvious desirable targets for later religious establishments as these 'first choice' locations had estates with access to the best resources, as later documentation indicates for Burnham, with Westgate and Overy being the dominant Medieval sites (Davison, Unpublished, 4).

As time goes on economic primacy shifts from estates such as Overy, to the market established sometime before 1209 in Burnham 'Market' itself (Dymond 1985, 159). This involved the laying out of a long green to link the churches of Westgate and Ulph, and Burnham market is granted a market licence by 1270 formalising the earlier relationship (Penn, 2005b, 72-73). However, early maps such as Faydens of 1797 (Barringer, 1989b) shows the haven around the earlier 'productive' site much as it is presently, although unconstrained by engineering works (Godwin, 2003). This suggests that the Goose Beck gradually silted up as early as Late Anglo-Saxon times and that this might have been an early factor in the process of settlement shift that led to the emergence of Burnham Market itself.

# Chapter 9: Sedgeford

## Extensive Polygon Analysis: Early Anglo-Saxon

**Fig. 139**

Despite a good level of exploration, firm evidence for Early Anglo-Saxon settlement in Sedgeford parish is sparse. A single pot base (NHER 1603) and brooch fragment (NHER 37252) from north of the river cannot confirm a settlement presence here, despite the fact that this is the site of an unexcavated Romano-British villa and the spatial relationship apparent between Early Anglo-Saxon settlements and Roman buildings in West Norfolk is well known (Gregory, 1982, Fig 1), A similar situation is found at the southern edge of the parish, where possible Early Anglo-Saxon pottery sherds and a girdle hanger were recovered during the excavation of ditches on a Romano-British farmstead (NHER 31814, Davies et.al, 2007, 237). A single decorated sherd of Early Anglo-Saxon pottery recovered during test pitting at the eastern extent of the present-day village (Cole Green) might equally represent settlement or burial evidence (Moshenska, 2005).

It is, therefore, largely through the evidence of burials that the Fifth to Seventh century presence in Sedgeford parish can be interpreted. During the Nineteenth and early Twentieth century, a number of cremation urns were recovered from two broad locations in the parish. The first location is 'the west side of the Heacham valley' (Ingleby, 1917) which may equate to somewhere around Eaton Farm (Cabot, Unpublished, 2000, and NHER 13882). The second location is described as 'near' Sedgeford Hall (Ingleby, 1920, 254), which lies to the north of the Heacham River, at the eastern extent of the modern parish (NHER 1612). Here, a line of cremation urns was reportedly found during gravel quarrying (NHER 1611, Myres, 1977, 282). Unfortunately, the location of many urn finds are now unknown (e.g NHER 11262) and as there are also early accounts pertaining to a possible Early Anglo-Saxon

inhumation cemetery ‘close to Sedgeford Hall’ (Ingleby, 1920, Cabot, 2000, 2001), it cannot now be concluded that these findspots indicate cremation cemeteries alone, as opposed to mixed-rite cemeteries (Hoggett, Unpublished, 210).

Since 2004, metal detecting in the Heacham River valley at the western end of the parish has recovered 183 Early Anglo-Saxon objects where an iron spearhead was found in 1952 (NHER 1473, Swanton, 1973). These finds indicate a ploughed-out cemetery dating to the early Fifth and later Sixth centuries; three Eighth century objects do not indicate sustained later activity. Recovered artefacts indicative of accompanied inhumation burials include many brooches, wrist clasps, girdle hangers, a strap fitting, a ring, a gilt shield mount, a sword, tweezers, and a bucket, which might represent an accessory vessel. A fragment of decorated silver sheet is a high status find. Towards the eastern extent of the site, finds of melted copper alloy artefacts, pottery fragments, human remains and an antler indicate the additional presence of cremation burials. Many finds come from a discrete sub-circular area of dark soil, 90m in diameter, towards the north east extent of the site (NHER 39363; **Fig. 141**), possibly indicating Early Anglo-Saxon re-use of a prehistoric barrow, a phenomenon noted at sites such as Mill Hill, Deal (Parfitt and Brugmann, 1997). The site also overlooks the aforementioned probable Roman villa on the northern slope of the Heacham River valley (NHER 1603). A solitary brooch recovered 350m east NHER 39363 indicates that the extent of concentrated burial activity has been successfully defined (SHARP, Unpublished).

More recently, a gilded silver Merovingian (possibly Visigothic) coin of the Fifth-Sixth century, which imitates the issues of Emperor Anastasias (491-518), pierced for suspension, has been recovered during metal detecting at NHER 39892, alongside a cruciform brooch fragment of the Sixth -Seventh century. These finds might indicate a burial focus or, alternatively, given the elevated topographic setting and Middle Anglo-Saxon finds from this site, artefact loss during the process of meeting in or moving through the landscape.

Concluding the Early Anglo-Saxon evidence from Sedgeford, it is clear that both cremation and inhumation was practiced in the Sedgeford environs between the Fifth and Seventh centuries, apparently at the same locations. Yet, establishing the location, let alone the relative chronology, of most burial foci is at present impossible. It is, however, interesting that the Early Anglo-Saxon material is mostly located away from the main Middle Anglo-Saxon site, which is positioned almost centrally in-between the disparate burial foci (see below). Here, metal-detecting has recovered five brooch fragments, a spearhead and girdle hanger (Fifth-Seventh centuries) indicating inhumation burials (NHER 32736). Unfortunately, these finds have not been closely located, and how they relate to the later settlement foci is a matter of conjecture. However, a similar situation might be imagined to that which occurred at Bloodmoor Hill, Carlton Colville, Suffolk, where metal detector finds of the Fifth -Sixth century have been recovered c.500m south-west of a separate settlement and cemetery of the Sixth-Eighth centuries interpreted as an estate centre (Lucy et al., 2009, 8-11).

To provide a better interpretation of the settlement evidence in Sedgeford parish, we have to look at the archaeological evidence from the surrounding area, including present-day settlements with early place-names: Snettisham and Heacham (Penn, 2005, 30; **Fig. 140**). At Snettisham, Early Anglo-Saxon pottery, animal bone and undated metalworking debris was recovered near to a Roman villa during the 1950's (NHER 1531/1529). These finds might represent the main occupation focus which the Sedgeford cemeteries served, although there is also a large Early Anglo-Saxon cemetery to the north of Snettisham (Penn, 2002). There may also have been a settlement at the coastal fringing Heacham, where a possible Middle Anglo Saxon site of exchange (NHER 16297), adjacent to an Early Anglo-Saxon cemetery (NHER 37217), is indicated by metalwork finds north and east of the present settlement. Fieldwalking finds of Early Anglo-Saxon pottery from Docking, also a primary place name and the later hundredal centre, may tentatively indicate settlement, as opposed to burial activity (NHER 34174).

At landscape scale the distribution of Early Anglo-Saxon pottery from parishes

surrounding Sedgeford, indicative either of settlement or cremation burial, contrasts strongly with areas of metalwork alone which presumably represent inhumation cemeteries) (**Fig. 140**). If we allow ourselves to equate the distribution of pottery to settlement, then a distinct pattern of dispersed settlement along the western edges of the study area is indicated. As the work of Hall and Coles (1994) has suggested, the coastline during the Early Anglo-Saxon period was much further inland and it appears that settlement was predominantly, although not exclusively, concentrated along the coastal edges and at the mouths of the rivers Heacham, Ingol and Hun. In contrast, metalwork scatters indicative of inhumation cemeteries are located away from the main settlement areas further inland and along the rivers (e.g. Fring (NHER 1659/23001) and Ringstead (NHER 28478/29041)). This raises the possibility that there was a deliberate delineation between those areas where people lived and worked, and those where the dead were buried. If this is the case, then the relative lack of Early Anglo-Saxon settlement evidence within Sedgeford parish is perhaps not entirely unexpected.

## Extensive Polygon Analysis: Middle Anglo-Saxon

**Fig. 142**

The Middle Anglo-Saxon presence in Sedgeford is relatively discrete, with the majority of visible settlement evidence restricted to areas south of the Heacham River where excavation and survey have been carried out since 1996 (NHER 1605 and 1607 (Boneyard Field) and NHER 1079 (Chalkpit Field), see below). Despite a good deal of metal-detecting in the parish, artefact scatters of the abundance associated with the other West Norfolk 'productive' sites have not been forthcoming. This is either a genuine absence, or Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon metalwork may concentrate towards the valley floor where deposits suitable for productive metal detecting are absent. The only other finds from south of the river are a few sherds of Ipswich Ware towards the southern extent of NHER 31814, and

the aforementioned metal artefacts from NHER 1473, which do not appear to indicate concentrated settlement activity.

North of the Heacham River, Middle Anglo-Saxon finds are largely restricted to Ipswich Ware pottery recovered during systematic fieldwalking (NHER 37295), indicative of cultivated land as opposed to buried settlement. On elevated land north of the modern village, metal detecting has recovered a Middle-Late Saxon strap fitting (NHER 40264) and an Ansate brooch (NHER 39892). While, closer to the base of the river valley, sherds of Ipswich Ware (NHER 1603) and a strap fitting (NHER 37252) indicate some activity around the site of the probable Roman villa. None of this material necessarily represents a habitation focus.

Within the present-day village, Ipswich Ware has been found at the West Hall focus during a test-pit survey (Mosenska, 2005, see below). It is possible that a certain amount of Middle Anglo-Saxon evidence is obscured beneath the currently occupied settlement, a phenomenon demonstrated by Lewis (2007, 133-163).

## Extensive Polygon Analysis: Late Anglo-Saxon and Medieval

**Fig. 143, Fig. 144**

In comparison with Middle Anglo-Saxon material, Late Anglo-Saxon material is relatively well distributed throughout Sedgeford parish (**Fig. 143**). Test-pit survey within the currently occupied settlement has recovered an abundance of Late Anglo-Saxon Thetford Ware pottery, perhaps reflecting the rapid development of individual settlement foci such West Hall and Cole Green at this time (Moshenska, 2005). Fieldwalking near the current settlement has recovered additional Thetford Wares (NHER 33616, NHER 33256, and NHER 36307).

Away from the present village, Thetford Ware has been recovered during

fieldwalking north of the river east of the present settlement (NHER 45477, NHER 45480, NHER 45493), towards the Peddars Way Roman road (NHER 20546), and west of the present settlement immediately east of the Roman villa site (NHER 40895). On higher land towards the southern extent of the parish, Thetford Ware has also been recovered (NHER 32736, NHER 31814 and NHER 1600). All these finds seem to indicate a significant expansion of cultivated land consistent with the model seen for Witton, North East Norfolk (Lawson, 1983). South of the river and close to the valley bottom, Thetford Ware has also been recovered from both west (NHER 11263, NHER 40895, NHER 1598) and east (NHER 49903, NHER 45476) of the main Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon settlement focus. Given that much of the valley floor is frequently reserved for modern pasture, as opposed to ploughed arable land, these findspots are significant and imply concentrated activity.

Despite the ceramic evidence indicating an apparent expansion in settlement and land use, Late Anglo-Saxon metalwork has only been recovered from systematically surveyed/excavated areas (e.g. NHER1079) and areas on the northern and southern periphery of the modern settlement: personal and functional metalwork at NHER 40264 and NHER 51078, and personal metalwork at NHER 1473. Despite the regional rarity of Late Anglo-Saxon metalwork, this is a notable lacuna in evidence given the amount of metal detecting that has been done in the parish. Either artefact loss occurred only in undetected areas towards the valley bottom or there is a genuine absence of metalwork. If the latter is the case then it must be explained.

Medieval material is extensively distributed in Sedgeford parish and seems to reflect the Late Anglo-Saxon pattern of occupation, with increasing dispersal from an earlier nucleated core (**Fig. 144**). Medieval finds also reflect, to an extent, where it has been possible for fieldwork to take place. Neverthless, the existing evidence seems to indicate a stable and successful set-up of multiple settlement foci as indicated in Domesday Book (see p.354 below). Relative wealth in this part of medieval Norfolk is perhaps also evidenced by the relatively large parish church (Faulkner et al. 2001).

## Previous Excavations: Interpreting Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon settlement and cemetery morphology and material culture profiles.

In contrast to the uncertainties surrounding the interpretation of surface finds, excavations have clearly revealed part of a *de novo* Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon settlement and cemetery on the southern valley slope of the River Heacham (NHER 1609) allowing for a much more detailed interpretation.

### Settlement morphology

**Fig. 145**

The site, located in two fields known as 'the Boneyard' (NHER 1609) and 'the Reeddam' (NHER 1607/1605) and noted as early as 1913, was partially excavated by the Ministry of Works in 1957 and 1958 (Jewell, Unpublished, Wilson and Hurst, 1959). These excavations recovered around 30 east-west aligned inhumations in association with Ipswich Ware, and a right-angled cut feature, with an east-west axis 50ft in length, interpreted as a footing trench for a large building, possibly a church (Wilson and Hurst, 1959, Jewell, Unpublished).

Subsequent excavations by SHARP between 1996 and 2007 (Davies, forthcoming) have confirmed the earlier observations, although it is felt that the 'footing trench' now represents a palisade enclosure, contemporary with the cemetery, delineating an area of ephemeral post-hole structures (Davies et al 2007). Over 300 east to west aligned burials relating to a substantial Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon Christian cemetery have now been excavated (**Fig. 145**). Radiocarbon dates indicate that burials commenced in the early Eighth century (Faulkner et al, 2001). The earliest burials are densely packed towards the northern side of the excavation area, whilst further south towards the presumed main settlement area burials only infrequently intercut (Cabot et al, 2004, 313-324). The northern cemetery boundary remains unidentified, but presumably lay to the south of the Heacham River.

Within the area of dense burial, up to five phases of inhumations were observed of both coffin and shroud variety. The presence of contrasting contemporary burial practices might indicate interments relating to different social groups. The presence of intercutting burials and charnel indicates that there was at certain times pressure on suitable areas of land available for burial, a common feature of Late Anglo-Saxon churchyard burial, for instance at Raunds, N.Hants (Boddington, 1996). However, no 'church' structure has yet been identified at Sedgeford. Instead, with the exception of the palisade enclosure, excavated settlement features - characteristically pits containing burnt debris, north to south aligned drainage gullies filled with mixed rubbish, and ephemeral structural remains - indicate an area reserved for informal industrial activates on the periphery of the settlement (**Fig. 145**).

As Figure **145** shows, three main phases of Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon date cut features have been observed on the site. The earliest features were plot boundaries delineating areas of space containing ephemeral structural evidence contemporary with the cemetery. This suggests a degree of settlement/cemetery planning from the outset, and points to a controlling elite of uncertain character. Later, drainage ditches containing Ipswich Ware and Thetford-type Ware pottery truncate burials, suggesting that parts of the cemetery had become disused despite a continuation of settlement activity further up the valley slope to the south. The final features on the site are large east-west aligned drainage ditches associated with Saxo-Norman water management, perhaps created in conjunction with a causeway built during the Late Anglo-Saxon period towards West Hall. By the Thirteenth century, the northern half of the cemetery had been given over to the cultivation of reeds (Cabot, et.al, 2004, 319), although parts of the site were abandoned as early as the end of the Tenth century (Davies et al, 2007, 238).

**Material culture profile**

Artefacts and ecofacts excavated from the Boneyard-Reeddam site provide a good insight into the character of the settlement. On a cautionary note, many excavated artefacts originate from habitation areas further to the south and were found within homogenous colluvial layers. They therefore only provide a broad 'window' onto Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon settlement character and cannot easily be used to analyse changes in material culture use over time. Yet, although the interpretative potential of the animal bone and ecofact assemblage is reduced, sheep appear to dominate, and charred bread wheat suggests informal industrial production (Cabot, et.al, 2004, 319).

The majority of pottery from the excavated site is Middle Anglo-Saxon Ipswich Ware and Late Anglo-Saxon Thetford-type Ware. As they are found together in features a strong Ninth century activity is indicated. Both wares are local to East Anglia but, as Chapter 3 demonstrated, might represent rather different modes of production and exchange. If the circulation of both ceramic types was commonplace at Ninth century Sedgeford, as **Fig. 28** suggests, it might indicate a complex and multi-tiered system of ceramic use reflecting different (but as yet intangible) aspects of trade, exchange and production.

Yet, although some evidence for conspicuous consumption and trade/exchange is present at the site, for example Middle Anglo-Saxon decorated vessel glass (**Fig. 152**) the quantities of material are not huge, particularly in comparison to the 'productive' sites at Bawsey, Congham, Burnham and Rudham. For example, from c.1000 square metres of excavated site, only two coins have been recovered, an East Anglian minted Series R *sceatta* (c.730-750) and a penny of Eadwald of East Anglia (796-798). However, as only the periphery of the settlement has so far been excavated, it might be that finds-rich deposits simply remain unexcavated. Further evidence for industrial production and continental links are, however, evidenced by Rhinish lava querns.

Personal ornamentation is represented by decorated bone artefacts, strap ends and pins (23). Despite the lack of grave goods under the Christian rite, social display was

evidently important to the population and is evidenced by the use of shroud pins and iron coffin furniture. Two styli have been recovered from the excavated site (**Fig. 152**). The styli finds have recently led Rippon to question how 'ordinary' the site at Sedgeford was and that it might actually be a 'productive' site with monastic associations (Rippon, 2009, 193). In contrast, Pestell has suggested that there is no such suggestion of a former religious centre at Sedgeford (Pestell, 2004, 41). In reality, as so few rural sites of this date have been comprehensively excavated it is almost impossible to say what is 'normal' for this period. We might more easily place undocumented 'estate centres' (Hamerow, 2002, 150) within a hierarchy using 'value-free' classificatory labels (Whyman, 2002).

Yet, despite interpretative limitations, the excavated sequence at Sedgeford indicates that secure deposits and associated material culture exist that could be further used to explore dynamic trends in settlement sequence, morphology and material culture profile. Exploring the spatial relationship and relative sequence between settlement and cemetery might also allow for the elite responsible for the highly planned cemetery and associated structures/enclosures to be identified, via an investigation of both ecclesiastical and secular space. The further evidence of limited conspicuous consumption, trade/exchange and production might also allow for further aspects of settlement identity to be explored. It was on this basis that new fieldwork was undertaken the main settlement area at the top of the valley slope immediately south of the previous excavations (Chalkpit Field, NHER 1079). The results of this work are now presented.

## Material culture profile and settlement morphology, integrated Fieldwork at NHER 1079

### Fieldwalking and Metal Detecting: Interpreting Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon functional zones

**Fig. 146**

Fieldwalking and metal detecting was undertaken throughout Chalkpit field (NHER1079/ NHER 31814), covering the entire field (10 hectares). The northern portion of the field was then more intensively field walked using the method outlined in Chapter 4. Within the intensive survey area, a high density of surface finds were observed, including Anglo-Saxon pottery fabrics, oyster shell and occasional metal detected finds, indicative of a ploughed-out settlement focus. The surface material appeared to have clear east, west and south boundaries, suggesting that the southern limit of the core occupation area had been successfully observed. Interestingly no clear 'off-site' halo of pottery indicative of a manuring scatter was observed away from the intense settlement focus, suggesting that ceramic loss is closely related to use during various activities at the settlement.

Three sherds of possible Early Anglo-Saxon pottery were recovered towards the centre-east of the observed artefact scatter. It is probable that this is the handbuilt element of a Middle Anglo-Saxon ceramic assemblage. A total of 24 sherds of Middle Anglo-Saxon Ipswich Ware were recovered, towards the east and northwest of the observed artefact scatter, perhaps representing buried middens or concentrations of archaeological features. Towards the eastern extent of the artefact scatter a Middle Anglo-Saxon Series O sceatta was recovered, but, in contrast to other 'productive' sites, no additional Middle Anglo-Saxon metalwork was recovered.

A total of 162 sherds of Thetford-type Wares were recovered, many with thumb impressed and roulette-decorated rims. These sherds covered much of the northern part of Chalkpit field, but were particularly abundant towards the western extent of the observed artefact scatter, suggesting concentrated activity in this part of the Late Anglo-Saxon settlement. There also seemed to be a clear east-west aligned end to the area of concentrated artefact loss approximately 100m south of the northern field boundary. Other diagnostic Late Anglo-Saxon finds were recovered by metal detecting and comprise a Late Saxon Borre style brooch, a ring and a pair of iron shears. Two Late Anglo-Saxon coins were also recovered from the western end of

the artefact scatter, a penny of Burgred of Mercia (852-74) and a Viking issue St. Edmund memorial penny (c.895-910) (**Fig. 152**). A concentrated scatter of oyster shell was also observed, apparently mirroring the concentrations of Late Saxon Thetford Ware. As at Burnham Market (Chapter 8) it has been suggested that dense spreads of oyster shell, coinciding with dark soil spreads, may represent ploughed-out surface rubbish middens, as identified below ground at a excavated sites such as Flixborough (Loveluck, 2007b, 70-72).

Medieval pottery was also recovered from the northern extent of NHER 1079, but in vastly reduced quantities in comparison to Late Anglo-Saxon material (only 19 sherds), suggesting cultivation of agricultural land and nothing more.

**Geophysical Survey: Interpreting Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon functional zones**

**Fig. 147**

A geophysical survey employing the methodology outlined in Chapter 4 was undertaken at the northern extent of NHER 1079 covering an area of 5 hectares. The underlying sand, gravel and chalk geology enabled extremely good results, and a number of very clear positive magnetic geophysical anomalies were identified (**Fig. 148**) although, as at Burnham, some natural striations complicated the interpretation of features. Modern features were also present including the east-west aligned ploughing regime **(6)** and **(6a),** ferrous spikes, a sewerage main **(7)**, a rutted farm track **(7a)**, a boundary fence **(7b)** and a deep furrow **(7c)**.

Magnetic responses of between + 8 and -10 NT indicate features filled with burnt debris from habitation and/or a semi-industrial process. The anomalies were concentrated in the northern half of the survey area and seem to represent enclosure ditches diagnostic of the southern extent of the Anglo-Saxon settlement focus, covering an area in the region of 4 hectares. In advance of trial trenching, it was encouraging that the Anglo-Saxon surface artefact scatters directly overlay the

areas of intense geophysical anomalies, suggesting that they were also Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon in date. This was further indicated by the fact that some of the identified linear anomalies seemed to share alignments with adjacent features excavated in Boneyard Field (NHER 1607) to the north (Davies, Hatton and Faulkner, 2007, 238).

The geophysical survey suggested that the settlement is bounded and 'framed' at its southern extent by a large curvilinear enclosure ditch (**1**) that surrounds a flattish platform in the field (**Fig. 65**). The large curvilinear ditch, best interpreted as a stock enclosure, seems to be largely free of concentrated ditching activity and of concentrated artefact loss. It is possible that the enclosure was a planned (as opposed to organically developed) feature created to mark the southern boundary of the of the settlement focus from the outset. Morphologically, the feature is comparable to the smallest enclosure at the elite focus at Milfield, Northumberland (Scull and Harding, 1990), but larger than those observed at potential 'freeman' settlements such as Bramford in Suffolk (Caruth, 1995).

Enclosure ditch (**1**) appears to have a major, apparently contemporaneous, subdivision, (**1a**), running on a broadly east-west alignment towards the northern extent of the field. This boundary (**1a**) has many more ephemeral co-axial anomalies, presumably ditches, located to the north of it (as far west as (**7a**) and as far east as (**11**)). Concentrated artefact loss (pottery and shell) is restricted to these areas north and east of the boundary (**1a**), suggesting that the anomalies date to the Middle Anglo-Saxon period onwards. The density of anomalies, including those on slightly contrasting alignments, indicates that this is a zone of sustained settlement activity. Co-axial patterns of Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon settlement plots (c.20m square in size) have previously been observed at excavated sites, for example, Wicken Bonhunt, Essex (Wade, 1980) and North Elmham, Norfolk (Wade Martins, 1980 a and b). Both these sites had plot arrangements that developed around large linear ditches (Reynolds, 2003, 130), such as (**1a**). A degree of planning is therefore implied at Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon Sedgeford, but perhaps not to the degree as is visible in very high status settlements (ibid. 106-8).

The settlement zone north of boundary (**1a**) is of additional interest as there appears to be some possibility of functional zonation, as indicated by discrete potential industrial features (features **13**, **12** and **12a**). Similar features in the form of a Middle Anglo-Saxon oven have already excavated further to the west of the surveyed area (Bates, 1991). On present evidence, a discrete industrial zone might be postulated here, as at Creake Road, Burnham Market (Percival and Williamson, 2005, 82), although clearly excavation is required to confirm this. Furthermore, the recovery of two Late Anglo-Saxon coins in this area remind us that different settlement functions may have co-existed within the same areas of a settlement.

In addition to the 'stock enclosure'(**1**) and co-axial settlement focus north of boundary (**1a**), further anomalies indicative of a land-use phase of a different character were also observed. Anomaly (**4**) is a WNW-ESE aligned presumed boundary ditch that abuts a longer north-south aligned boundary ditch (**2**)/(**3**). Boundary ditch (**4**) is located c.30m south of east-west boundary (**1a**), and boundary ditch (**2**)/(**3**) is located 20m to the west of the eastern arm of enclosure (**1**), mirroring its alignment. It is tempting to view boundaries (**4**) and (**2**)/(**3**) as a sub-division of the larger stock enclosure (**1**). Ditch (**3**) also has a further apparent double ditch, (**5**), running-off it on a northwest to southeast alignment. This double ditch, best interpreted as a droveway, is important as it clearly truncates east-west boundary (**1a**). If droveway (**5**) is broadly contemporaneous to enclosure subdivision (**3**) then it suggests that, later in the settlement's life, there is significant replanning, perhaps to incorporate droveways. In addition, there are other features that share a common alignment with potential droveway (**5**), including possible ditches (**10**) and (**8**). These features seem to represent later phases of ditched boundaries or droveways north of boundary (**1a**), perhaps indicating functional changes in the previously intensely enclosed settlement zone.

The enclosed space created between potentially later boundaries (**4**), (**3**) and (**1a**) incorporate a dense area of positive geophysical activity, potentially pitting. Interestingly, this area also represents an extension of concentrated Late Anglo-

Saxon artefact loss beyond the southern extent of east-west boundary (**1a**). The implication is that this is a zone of later settlement following the introduction of the droveways (**5**). Future excavation here might hope to identify some key Late Anglo-Saxon transformations to functional zones, perhaps reflecting changes in waste disposal practice. Possible boundaries (**9**), (**6**) and (**11**), observed during the geophysical survey apparently relate spatially to boundary (**4**) and may also belong to this phase of land-use.

Finally, a number of enigmatic positive magnetic anomalies were identified in the south-east corner of the surveyed area (**14**-**14d**). It is just possible that these features are surface rubbish middens that contain high temperature waste. If this is the case then, as with the shell /dark soil spread north of (**1a**) and the pits southwest of (**5**), it provides further evidence for contrasting waste disposal practices at Sedgeford, and a potentially useful window onto changing social situations. As Chapter 2 noted, surface middens might suggest communal living arrangements, whilst discard of waste in pits might suggest an emphasis on personal and private space (Reynolds, 2003). Establishing the relative chronology of contrasting rubbish discard strategies at Sedgeford might therefore provide important future insight into transforming settlement character, especially given that the introduction of large droveways already indicates a potential major re-planning at some point later in the settlement's life.

Combining the results of fieldwalking and geophysical survey has enabled important new interpretative insights into the nature of settlement remains at Chalkpit Field North (NHER 1079). Towards the north of the survey area, there are at least two or three discrete functional zones. However, perhaps most importantly for the interpretation of the Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon settlement is the observation that there were a number of phases of land-use on the site. This phenomenon has, of course, been previously observed in relation to the Boneyard-Reeddam excavations (see above), where at least three main phases of cut features (some of which were contemporary with a cemetery) were dated from the early Eighth century through to the Tenth or Eleventh century (Cabot, Davies and Hoggett, 2004, 316). However,

observing features over a larger area has allowed for a much better insight into continuity and change in the organisation of space within the settlement over time.

**Trial Trenching: Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon settlement morphology, chronology and material culture profile.**

**Fig. 149**

A number of the observations concerning the potential settlement character from the geophysical survey and fieldwalking results are necessarily speculative. Fortunately, there was an opportunity to carry out follow-up trial trenching at NHER 1079, providing an important window onto the precise phasing and chronology of the features observed during the geophysical survey (see Davies, forthcoming, for a full report). This exercise allowed for the material culture profile, and therefore the transforming socio-economic character, of the Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon settlement to be much better identified and interpreted from more secure deposits than were available at the Boneyard-Reeddam activity focus.

Five trial trenches were excavated, totalling 195 square metres and targeting the geophysical anomalies identified at the northern extent of the NHER 1079 settlement focus (**Fig. 149**). These trenches successfully revealed a dynamic sequence of ditch digging, consisting of at least three distinct phases of activity attributed to the Middle Saxon period, the Mid-Late Ninth century (mixed Ipswich Ware/Thetford Ware contexts, with a high percentage of the former) and the Late Anglo-Saxon period.

Discarded Middle Anglo-Saxon material culture included evidence for a degree of craft/production activities (loom weight), conspicuous consumption (decorated vessel glass, **Fig. 152**) and personal ornament (hooked tag, pin), whilst industrial activity was evidenced by an oven dated to the Mid-Late Ninth century. Late Anglo-Saxon material culture was dominated by iron artefacts with a functional feel,

although iron buckles (Tenth century) indicating personal ornamentation were recovered in addition to horse equipment (Tenth – Eleventh century) indicating a high-status presence. On this evidence a multifunctional settlement with a small elite presence might be argued for in all phases.

Perhaps most importantly, an assemblage of almost 10,000 fragments of animal bone was recovered from secure deposits allowing observations to be made concerning changing patterns of animal exploitation (Poole, forthcoming). Analysis of the animal bones suggested a shift in the agricultural economy and resource exploitation characterised by a gradual transition from an assemblage dominated by sheep in the Middle Anglo-Saxon Period, to an assemblage where cattle are more prominent in the Late Anglo-Saxon Period (**Fig. 150**). This reflects a transition from a settlement involved in wool production (as further evidenced by a high proportion of older sheep not killed for their meat) to a consumer settlement (as reflected by a good proportion of cattle being consumed as meat). This pattern is accompanied by a drop in the number of domestic birds by the Late Anglo-Saxon period, and an increase in wild species (such as Roe deer) (ibid.).

It is argued that this combination of features might reflect a wider change in the settlement character of Sedgeford; from a putative Middle Anglo-Saxon ecclesiastical centre, to a Late Anglo-Saxon secular centre. Domestic birds were consumed in abundance at monastic sites under Benedictine rule, (Harvey 2006, 215-227). However, caution must be exercised here as many Middle Anglo-Saxon monasteries were living by a number of different rules in addition to the Benedictine (Pestell, 2004, 22), and we cannot assume uniform dietary restrictions. Furthermore, wild species are increasingly attached to secular status as manifest through hunting as time progresses, as further evidenced by the presence of horse harness equipment in Late Anglo-Saxon features. This observed transformation in settlement character at Sedgeford might eventually help to explain why both the settlement and cemetery focus were abandoned in favour of the settlement focus north of the River Heacham at West Hall by the Eleventh century (Cox and Hoggett, forthcoming). At the very least, this exercise has demonstrated that, even at undocumented sites

with sparse surface metal scatters, systematic survey followed by trial excavation can add a degree of precision, in terms of establishing settlement sequence, allowing transformations at rural centres to be better interpreted.

## Coinage Profile

**Fig. 151**

The coinage recovered from Sedgeford is, in recovery terms at least, a unique assemblage. In total, eight Anglo-Saxon coins have been recovered from the parish. With the exception of the pierced Merovingian *tremiss* (see above, not shown on **Fig. 151**), all coins have been recovered from the main Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon settlement and cemetery focus. Although the Merovingian *tremiss* shows that continental coinage was circulating in the Sedgeford area prior to East Anglian issues, providing a tentative context for the economic galvanisation that we see at the end of the Seventh century, it cannot be used in the interpretation of the main settlement.

In comparison to most of the West Norfolk 'productive' sites, the coin assemblage from the Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon settlement at Sedgeford is relatively small (7 coins). However, it might also be argued that this is perhaps a more representative assemblage due to the amount of intensive fieldwork undertaken. The coins have been recovered in a number of different ways, including during systematic field survey (2 coins), excavation (four coins: two from NHER 1079 and two from NHER 1609) and metal detecting (one coin). This recovery pattern suggests that without the level of intensive fieldwork that has occurred, Sedgeford would be numisimatically nearly invisible. This raises the awkward possibility that many other Norfolk sites only appear devoid of coin finds due to a lack of intensive fieldwork.

The coin assemblage has a date range of 700-910, and consists of a Kentish Series O *sceatta* (700-720), two East Anglian Series R *sceattas* (c.730-750), a Penny of

Eadwald of East Anglia (796-798), a penny of Burgred of Mercia (852-74) (**Fig. 152**) and a Viking issue St. Edmund memorial penny (c.895-910) (**Fig. 152**). Two more very recent finds (2009) are a further Series R *sceatta* (c.730-750) and a very rare denier of Pepin III, the father of Charlemagne (755-68).

The Sedgeford coin assemblage is exceptional in that it contrasts strongly with the other 'productive' sites. Most noticeably it is not dominated by the early *sceatta* coins and, between 680 and 750, is completely devoid of early continental *sceattas*. This suggests, as is also indicated by the remaining archaeological evidence, that Sedgeford was not an early focus of trade and exchange. However, the recovery of the late East Anglian Series R *sceattas* perhaps hint at an economic awakening coinciding with the end of *sceatta*-use at Sedgeford, perhaps around the time that the cemetery site is coming into use. This notion is supported by the fact that four later coins spanning 755-910 have been recovered, proportionally a large number. However, on a cautionary note the Sedgeford coin assemblage would perhaps no longer appear so exceptional if settlement sites were more regularly subject to systematic survey and excavation.

Nevertheless, the three coin finds dating to between c.755 and 874 (the penny of Eadwald of East Anglia (796-798), the penny of Burgred of Mercia (852-74) and the *denier* of Pepin III (755-68)) are of particular significance as this is a period when the 'productive' sites are rendered almost invisible numisimatically (the exception being Carolingian coins from Burnham, Wormegay and Congham). On present evidence, it is possible to suggest that, in contrast to the 'productive' sites, Sedgeford experiences a period of economic progression (or at least stability) during the later Eighth and Ninth centuries. Interestingly, the Ninth century also seems to be the period of most abundant ceramic discard at the site. The different point of origin for these three coins, and the different political situations under which they were minted (a formative Carolingian Europe, a short lived independent East Anglia and an aggressive Mercia), provides good evidence for the huge reorientations occurring to the economic landscape and potential markets of Anglo-Saxon England at this time. Indeed, the political transformations observed in the Eighth to Ninth century

coinage at Sedgeford perhaps helps to explain why coinage stops being recovered from other pre-existing market sites (the 'productive'sites). Perhaps, because Sedgeford was never an important trade focus, the community - whether ecclesiastical, secular or both - occupied a more stable economic niche, and was therefore more immune to these transformations.

The latest coin from Sedgeford, a Viking issue St. Edmund memorial penny (c.895-910) brings potential trade/exchange related activity at the site into the Tenth century; again this is a time of immense political transformations. This final coin find coincides with the period in which we see big changes in land-use at Sedgeford, and this coin reminds us of the new political context of the Danelaw. This period of potential Scandinavian/Anglo-Scandinavian influence coincides with the end of the occupation sequence at the Boneyard-Reeddam site, and might well provide a context for the transformations that we see there.

## Late Anglo-Saxon and Medieval historical and archaeological background

Sedgeford is first attested to in Domesday Book (1086) and was almost exclusively held by the Bishop of Norwich. Prior to Domesday, Gyrth held Sedgeford, but with an array of different smallholders, freemen and villagers at a number of unnamed estates (DB. 10, 20). Fring, for example - now a separate parish in its own right - is listed as an outlier to the main manor, whilst Gnatingdon, equated to East Hall by Williamson (2003, 87), is listed as a separate *ville* (DB. 61, 3). One of the unnamed estates held by eight freemen (DB. 10, 20) has been equated to Eaton (Hammond, 1984). By the time of a c.1630 estate map Eaton had divided up into distinct open-field systems held a number of manors (NRO Le Strange OB5). This might indicate a post-conquest assertion of propriety rights by lords over the freemen (Williamson, 2003, 87).

The evidence of Domesday Book suggests that Late Anglo-Saxon Sedgeford was not a single entity, but a scatter of farms or hamlets along the marshy flood plain of the

Heacham River, a phenomenon also noted in South Cambridgeshire (Williamson, 2003, 87). This potentially complex pre-Domesday set-up is reflected well in the present topography. For example, three settlements, attested to in Fourteenth century pipe rolls, survive as single farms: East Hall, Eaton and Gnatingdon (Fogarty, 2001, 38, Moshenska, 2005, 1). Most convincingly however the c.1630 tithe map shows that the modern village was, at that time, two dispersed hamlets, Cole Green (East Gate) and West Hall (NRO Le Strange OB5). Test pitting at Cole Green suggested an Early and Late Anglo Saxon presence (see above.), whilst West Hall has been investigated in detail archaeologically, producing compelling evidence to support the idea of a dynamic pre-Domesday set-up.

Excavations at West Hall revealed structural evidence, including a floor truncated by a burial (dated to cal AD 1010-1180) that pre-dates the extant and adjacent Twelfth century church of St. Mary's (Faulkner, 2001, 129). This early structure may represent some form of manorial chapel or even an early church (Cox, pers comm.). Other artefacts recovered from West Hall (such as Thetford Wares) indicate a Late Anglo-Saxon date for the commencement of settlement activity in this area (Cox and Hoggett, forthcoming). Furthermore, medieval documents indicate three medieval manors in this area: two belonging to Norwich Cathedral Priory (West Hall and East Hall), and one secular manor owned by the de Sedgefords. West Hall manor has been equated to the location of the extant West Hall house, while a building platform immediately west of West Hall house, may be the de Sedgeford's manor (Cox, forthcoming). If this were the case, then the two manors are situated either side of St. Mary's church, providing further indication of a complex system of both secular and ecclesiastical manorial control, perhaps with competing elites.

Eaton, now a deserted medieval hamlet represented by earthworks and surface finds of Late Anglo-Saxon pottery, a kilometre to the east of the modern village can also help us understand the character of the dispersed settlements. The name Eaton (farmstead or estate on a river) is considered to 'denote a settlement which performed a special local function in relation to the river' (Mills, 2003). This might well suggest that, when the place name was fossilised, this activity focus was

perceived as subsidiary to another (possibly manorial) settlement. Interestingly, a number of possible mill sites are located at Eaton, perhaps giving an indication of the specialised production occurring here (Faulkner et al. 1997). This point reiterates that the Domesday landscape around Sedgeford may have contained settlements of contrasting status: both manorial foci and specialist settlements or *berewicks* (Williamson, 1993). Interestingly, there is also some documentary evidence pointing to a later settlement, *Cheeswic*, in the Sedgeford environs (Hammond, 2005). This sort of evidence highlights many possible reasons why the main Middle-Late Anglo Saxon settlement/cemetery focus in Sedgeford might have 'failed' or shifted.

# Chapter 10: Bawsey

## Extensive Polygon Analysis and material culture profile: Early Anglo-Saxon

**Fig. 153**

Archaeological evidence in Bawsey parish is concentrated on a prominent sand and gravel hill (NHER 25962) in the northwest of the modern parish, directly south of the River Gaywood. This particular hill appears to have been a landscape feature of some importance from an early date. Surface finds of three Iron Age gold torcs suggest a specialised use of the site at this time, while finds of pottery, tile and coin indicate a small and unexceptional Roman settlement on the northern slope (Rogerson, 2003, 113). The etymology of the place name Bawsey (in Domesday Book 'Bowesia') seems to reflect this topographical feature, with '*eye*' meaning island (Old English) and the '*Baw*' element interpretable either as 'gadfly'(NHER Anon) or, perhaps more reasonably, as 'Beaw', a personal name; therefore, OE 'Beaw's island' (DEPN 31). However, we cannot assume that the place-name necessarily refers to the same hill.

Early Anglo-Saxon evidence in the Bawsey environs is located exclusively within the boundary of NHER 25962 (findspots under NHER 21078 and 12364 denote specific areas within this polygon), the core focus of Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon activity. Located findspots of Early Saxon metalwork concentrate in the northern half of the area (11 findspots) between the River Gaywood and the north facing slope/ base of the central hill. Only 2 findspots are located further south, within the area of an oval enclosure identified by geophysical survey (see below; GSB Prospection, 1998). Recovered metal artefacts could reflect either buried cemetery or settlement, as many of the objects could have been deposited in both. Functional items, such as girdle hangers, a shield, a figurine, hanging bowls (2) and a vessel, seem most likely to represent disturbed burial contexts, whilst personal ornamentation (brooches (3),

a strap fitting, a ring and a buckle) might feasibly relate to settlement activity (see **Fig. 159**).

In light of the above, the significance of two late Seventh century coin finds, an early continental gold *tremmiss* (uncertain type, 580-675) and a Kentish gold *thrymsa* (Two Emperor type, 650-675), probably recovered from NHER 25962 (Rogerson, 2003, 112), must also remain conjectural. Finds of Seventh century gold coins are generally considered significant for denoting both early economic activity and a deliberate linking with continental elite identities (Blackburn, 2003, 32, Naylor, 2004, 91). However, although the Bawsey finds could provide early evidence for exchange or transactions, they could also be associated with burial activity.

Possible Early Anglo-Saxon pottery has also been recovered from NHER 25962, although not during the systematic fieldwalking carried out in 1998 (in this instance two handmade sherds may in fact represent the handmade component of a varied Middle Anglo-Saxon ceramic assemblage; Pestell, pers comm.). These sherds, if indeed Early Anglo-Saxon in date, could reflect either burial (cremation/accessory vessel) or settlement related activity. However, Chester-Kadwell has suggested a '...close association between mortuary and settlement areas and complete intervisibility between the two' (Chester-Kadwell, 2009, 149-150). Therefore, even if the Early Anglo-Saxon pottery at Bawsey indicates buried cemetery related material, a nearby settlement of unknown character might be implied. Hutcheson has noted that an Early Anglo-Saxon cemetery and finds at Gaywood, including a rare *numma* of Heracles (612-616), make this the most likely early settlement area (Hutcheson, pers comm.).

In conclusion, although characterising the nature of the settlement/burial activity at Early Anglo-Saxon Bawsey is at present impossible the evidence at least demonstrates that NHER 25962 was a significant activity focus by the Seventh century. Additionally, the distribution of lost Early Saxon metalwork, concentrated between the River Gaywood and the north facing slope/ base of the central hill, is very interesting. This pattern of finds-loss is strongly repeated in the Middle Anglo-

Saxon period (with both pottery and metalwork/coin loss). On present evidence, therefore, it is tempting to postulate the existence of a concentrated activity focus (if not common functional zones) by the Seventh century that continued into the Middle Anglo-Saxon period, when the nature of this activity becomes much clearer.

Importantly, for the future successful interpretation of the Early Saxon site at Bawsey, we must also note that the Fen-edge is a special landscape, a notion supported by the later existence of distinct coastal attitudes to tradable commodities such as pottery (Loveluck and Tys, 2006, 141). Pestell (2004, 54-55) has noted that, by the Middle Anglo-Saxon period, prominent topographic features in liminial and isolated marshland were frequently chosen as sites for important places, such as monastic communities. If we 'back-project' this aspect of Anglo-Saxon consciousness into the earlier, pagan, period, we may suppose an equally complex set of relationships determining settlement/cemetery location.

## Extensive Polygon Analysis: Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon

**Fig. 154, Fig. 155**

Because the site at Bawsey is discrete, extensive polygon analysis of the Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon evidence is not particularly useful. Instead, a programme of geophysical survey, fieldwalking and trial excavation, undertaken around the ruins of St. James' Church (NHER 25962) and a cropmark enclosure observed from aerial photographs by the Channel Four television programme Time Team in 1998, provide more important detailed data concerning the morphology of the 'productive' site'. These data, combined with additional information provided by plotting surface finds of coinage and metalwork, allow for an initial interpretation of Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon functional zones at NHER 25962.

## Geophysical survey: Interpreting Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon functional zones

**Fig. 157**

The geophysical survey (mostly magnetometry), covered five areas totalling 6.5 hectares. The aim of this survey was to identify the location of the presumed enclosure ditch that had initially been observed by aerial photography, and evaluate the remainder of NHER 25962 (GSB Prospection, 1998). The survey was highly successful, revealing a large number of features.

The clearest results were obtained to the east of St. James' Church. Here, the eastern circuit of the main enclosure ditch, rounded at the northern end, was observed extending up to 100m east of the church (**1**). This enclosure ditch appears to be up to 6 or 7 metres wide, and gave a positive response of up to +3 NT (**1**). The southern extent of the feature runs beyond the presently surveyed area. Unfortunately, there is some uncertainty about the identification of the western half of the main enclosure. The aerial photographs suggest that we should be looking for an elongated oval, but anomalies in the western half of the survey are hard to match to the anomaly (**1**) to the east. GSB Prospection (Unpublished, 3) suggested that a north-south aligned ditch, just possibly with an eastern return, towards the western extremity of the surveyed area was the best candidate for the western side of the main enclosure, but it appears to run beyond the northern extent of the surveyed area (**7**). Morphologically, a more suitable candidate for the western extent of the main enclosure might be a north-south curvilinear ditch, within an area of discrete magnetic anomalies, located slightly to the east (**8**). However, it is most probable that a vast number of archaeological features of contrasting phases were not identified in the western half of the surveyed area due to the presence of deep topsoil further north towards the River Gaywood.

South of the church, a series of linear anomalies indicative of ditched co-axial land sub-divisions were identified (**2**). These features might belong to a separate phase of

activity to the 'main enclosure' ditch (**1**). A large NNE to SSW ditch extending north from the 'main enclosure' was also observed towards the eastern end of the surveyed area (**3**). The elevated magnetic response from this ditch indicated that it could have been filled with heavily burnt material. A second ditch (**4**), also filled with magnetic material, cuts the 'main enclosure' and joins the regular sub-division ditches (**2**) to the south of the church. Other discrete anomalies in this eastern area (**5**) may reflect the presence of *in situ* fired remains, indicative of a broad zone of industrial activity, buried rubbish pits or even structures both within and beyond the main enclosure (**1**). North of the main enclosure (**1**), a small enclosure, also noted on aerial photographs and approximately 60m x 60m in size (**6**), might be interpretable as a form of 'entrance' enclosure between the 'main enclosure' and lower land to the north (GSB Prospection, 1998, 2). However, this area is subject to heavy plough truncation which reduces interpretative potential.

In conclusion, the amount of ditched features identified at NHER 25962, including those features indicative of pits or structures, proves beyond doubt that the site at Bawsey was a permanent settlement for long periods of time. This information, when combined with dated artefacts obtained from fieldwalking, metal detecting and (so far unpublished) trial excavations, including a surface find of a Late Anglo-Saxon stone architectural fragment, indicate that numerous functional zones relating to permanent settlement were in use during the Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon periods.

Unfortunately, due to the confusing results in the western half of the surveyed area, conclusions concerning the exact morphology of the 'main enclosure' (**1**) must await the full publication of the geophysical survey or, more likely, further fieldwork. However, at this stage, the geophysical survey has already clearly demonstrated, at least in the eastern part of the surveyed area, the presence of different phases of land-use. For example, the regular sub-division ditches (**2**) might be contemporaneous with parts of the main enclosure ditch (**1**) as they share a spatial relationship with ditch (**4**). Yet, this ditch is certainly not contemporary with at least some of the 'main enclosure' (**1**). The northern extension of the main enclosure (**3**)

also hints that this apparently coherent feature is not actually a simple, one phase monument, and that, upon further investigation, we might expect to find substantial morphological transformations at NHER 25962 during the lifetime of the site. Indeed, part of this enclosure may appear on tithe maps as late as c. 1850), perhaps suggesting persistent later re-use (GSB Prospection, Unpublished, 3).

## Pottery from fieldwalking and geophysical survey: Interpreting Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon functional zones

**Fig. 158**

Fieldwalking was undertaken on an intensive gridded basis (20 by 20m squares) covering an area of 220m (north to south) by 360m (east-west), including all areas covered by the 1998 geophysical survey - a total area of just under 8 hectares. At present, only the Middle Anglo-Saxon plots have been made available for interpretation (**Fig. 158**), but these demonstrate a concentrated area of Ipswich Ware pottery finds (in terms of both count and weight) in the northwest corner of NHER 25962, particularly in an east-west strip close to the River Gaywood. It is unclear if this observed distribution is a product of a taphonomic process, a nuance of finds recovery/reporting, or a genuine pattern of pottery loss. However, similar concentrations of Ipswich Ware at other West Norfolk sites (e.g. Burnham, Chapter 8) represent use-related areas of finds-loss, as opposed to scatters related to agricultural activities such as manuring (Lambrick, 1977).

Somewhat surprisingly, pottery finds loss from within the main enclosure identified by geophysics/aerial photography are minimal, although not entirely absent. The lack of pottery finds towards the east and south of the site indicates that either Middle Anglo-Saxon pottery discard (if not use) was occurring *outside* this enclosure, or that the pottery has subsequently travelled down-slope by colluvial process to produce the observed surface distribution.

Only two Middle Anglo-Saxon pottery sherds that were not Ipswich Ware were recovered; both are handbuilt sherds and do not provide further evidence of wider trade and exchange (Pestell, pers comm.). The lack of imported ceramics is intriguing, given the abundance of contemporary continental coinage (see below), and perhaps suggests that coinage and ceramics were subject to contrasting exchange mechanisms. Late Anglo-Saxon Thetford Ware has also been recovered in areas corresponding with Middle Anglo-Saxon pottery, perhaps demonstrating some continuity in functional zones rather than abrupt change, although quantities are not spectacular (Pestell, pers comm.).

The distribution of Middle Anglo-Saxon pottery roughly corresponds with areas of concentrated Middle Anglo-Saxon metalwork/coin loss, although the most intense focus seems to be a little to the west of the most abundant areas of Middle Saxon metalwork loss. It is presently unclear if this observed distribution is a product of a taphonomic process, a nuance of finds recovery/reporting, or a genuinely differential pattern. However, if the latter were the case, then future recovery of distinct areas of finds-loss relating to different functional zones is a distinct possibility.

## Coin and metalwork finds from metal detecting: Interpreting Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon functional zones

*Middle Anglo-Saxon*

**Fig. 160**

As with the preceding Early Anglo-Saxon period (**Fig. 159**), surface metalwork finds remain concentrated in the northern and western half of NHER25962 (**Fig. 160**). There are notably less recorded findspots identified within the area of the 'main enclosure', although it is unclear whether this observed surface pattern reflects taphonomic processes, uneven reporting of recovered finds, or real functional zonation. Indeed, a number of unlocated metalwork findspots have been attributed

to the interior of the ditched enclosure (Rogerson, 2003, 113). However, if we are actually observing a 'real' pattern from the recorded findspot locations, then surface finds of both Middle Anglo-Saxon coinage and metalwork are being more frequently lost in a 'waterfront' zone north of the main (presumably settlement) enclosure. This perhaps indicates a sustained focus where transactions occurred (i.e. a market/fair), and where finds loss occurred more frequently because of the sustained utilisation of the waterfront for the movement of materials in and out of the site.

Furthermore, there may also be contrasting patterns evident in the distributions of Middle Anglo-Saxon coinage and functional metalwork. Functional metalwork appears concentrated in the centre north of the 'waterfront' zone, while coinage has two main foci of loss towards the western extent and the eastern extent of the 'waterfront' zone. Interestingly, the respective loss patterns appear to complement one another: coin loss does not occur where functional metalwork is strongest. If these are indeed real patterns, they may suggest subtle but as yet uncharacterised variations in the use of space within this area.

*Late Anglo-Saxon*

**Fig. 161**

By the Late Anglo-Saxon period metalwork and (especially) coin loss is vastly reduced. However, areas of finds loss remain largely consistent, concentrating in the northern and western half of NHER25962. However, the distinct separation between 'waterfront area' (high finds loss) and 'main enclosure' area (virtually no finds loss) is not nearly as distinct when compared to the Middle Anglo-Saxon finds. Furthermore, there is no distinct patterning of finds-loss pertaining to items of personal metalwork, functional metalwork or coinage. In contrast, there is increased finds-loss towards the western periphery of NHER25962, perhaps indicating a shift in activities resulting in metalwork loss (be that transaction or habitation) towards this part of the settlement area.

## Excavated evidence: Interpreting Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon functional zones

In 1998 Time Team excavated 14 trenches at NHER 25962, sampling all the main anomalies noted during geophysical survey (Taylor, 1999). In advance of full publication, the results of this work cannot be considered in detail. However, a few initial observations can be gleaned from other published sources.

Firstly, trial trenching of the 'main enclosure' (including trenches over its disputed western circuit) revealed a substantial ditch. Crucially, this feature produced quantities of Ipswich Ware and therefore 'seems to date' from 720-850 (Hutcheson, 2006, 203). However, the ditch was not fully explored during excavation. Because of this, the nature of the deposits containing the Ipswich Ware are uncertain - they might represent re-worked deposits and not primary dating evidence (Hutcheson, pers comm.). Because of this the dating of the observed 'main enclosure' is debatable.

Further excavation within the area of the main enclosure, near the church, revealed burials, pits and a probable bread oven. The stratigraphically earliest burial, east-west aligned and without grave goods, produced a radiocarbon date of cal. AD 668-897 at 2-sigma (Blair, 2005, 210, note.120). Both the Seventh to Ninth century date and the manner of the inhumations suggested post-conversion Christian burials. Initial suspicions that one burial had a sword cut to the skull and that this evidenced a Viking attack were altered to suggest that this individual had suffered a failed surgical procedure (Taylor, 1999). Industrial activity was indicated by fired remains in pits. Importantly, within the area of 'industrial activity' indicated by the geophysical survey (**Fig. 157**) a probable bread oven, consisting of a collapsed fired clay superstructure and stake-holes, was excavated (*ibid*). Similar Middle Anglo-Saxon examples have been excavated at Sedgeford (Bates, 1991)).

The presence of a possible Christian cemetery, industrial production waste and informal industry (a bread oven) indicates a multi functional Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon settlement focus. At this stage, however, one important barrier to interpretation is the uncertain date of the primary ditch fills of the 'main enclosure'. Hutcheson is concerned about the apparent absence of Thetford Wares, when there is clearly excellent additional artefactual evidence indicating a strong Late Saxon presence at the settlement (Hutcheson, pers comm.).

## Material culture profile and Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon settlement identity

In advance of future publication or excavation that would no doubt increase our understanding of the morphology and sequence of the Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon settlement at NHER 25962, additional interpretative insights into the changing nature of the settlement may only be gained by considering the surface-find material culture assemblage as a whole.

## Metalwork profile

*Middle Anglo-Saxon*

There are 45 recorded findspots of diagnostic Middle Anglo-Saxon metalwork. Some findspots comprise as many as ten individual items, the plotted findspots therefore represent an uncertain proportion of the total Middle Anglo-Saxon metal finds from NHER 25962 (**Fig. 160**). The finds can be broken down into personal metalwork (19 findspots), functional metalwork (11 findspots) and coinage (15 findspots). Functional metalwork includes furniture fittings, six styli, a hanging bowl, a copper alloy sheet fragment in the form of a mask, a silver prick spur, a pelta shaped vessel mount (possibly Seventh century), and a weight. Personal metalwork includes many pins, strap ends, hooked tags, Ansate brooches, buckles and rare items such as tweezers, and finger rings. Other items include functional items that could also have

been worn as personal ornamentation, such as a key, a knife and a styliform strap end.

The recovery of seven styli of Middle (or possibly Late) Anglo-Saxon date, consisting of six copper alloy examples and a single silver stylus (**Fig. 163**) (Pestell, 2004, 43) provides evidence of some form of literacy, at this time 'a medium for expressing status and wealth (Pestell, 2004, 47.)'. However, as Chapter 3 noted, stylus finds cannot necessarily help to distinguish between secular or ecclesiastical communities, instead reflecting quite subtle expressions of elite identity.

The combination of functions represented by the lost Middle Anglo-Saxon metalwork alone indicates an activity focus of some importance, with a presumably literate population utilising personal ornamentation and engaging in transactions (requiring styli and a weight). The additional presence of coinage, Ipswich Ware, geophysical anomalies and excavated features confirms this. The abundant metalwork from the apparent 'waterfront' area suggests a Middle Anglo-Saxon functional zone reserved for transaction/exchange. Occasionally, items of metalwork provide an insight into the character of these trade and exchange contacts, something that the evidence of coinage (see below) demonstrates most clearly. For example, a pin with enameled 'Celtic' decoration evidences at least indirect contacts with Early Medieval Ireland (see Blackburn, Margeson and Rogerson, 2000, Unpublished).

*Late Anglo-Saxon*

There are 31 recorded findspots of diagnostic Late Anglo-Saxon metalwork (**Fig. 161**). Some findspots have as many as seven such items and they represent an unknown proportion of the total Late Anglo-Saxon metal finds from NHER 25962. The finds can be broken down into personal metalwork (18 findspots), functional metalwork (9 findspots) and coinage (4 findspots). Functional metalwork includes a balance, a box, a bridle bit, a disc, a weight and copper alloy ingots. Personal metalwork includes brooches, buckles, pins, other dress components, tweezers and a finger ring.

The proportions of findspots of Late Anglo-Saxon personal and functional metalwork are not significantly different from the Middle Anglo-Saxon findspots, but a reduction in the number of Late Anglo-Saxon coin findspots represents a real reduction: 73 Middle Anglo-Saxon coins recorded on the Early Medieval coins corpus, as opposed to 16 Late Anglo-Saxon coins. Whether this represents a change in the economic fortune or the use of coinage at Bawsey between the Middle Saxon and Late Saxon period is considered in more detail below. However, some form of trade, exchange or production is also indicated by the presence of two copper alloy ingots, both flat bars with rounded ends and hammer marks, weighing 9.359g (0.3301oz) and 9.881g (0.3485oz)). It has been suggested that the use of bullion ingots for everyday commercial transactions was a Scandinavian introduction based on mistrust of native coinage that led to a dual economy (of coin and bullion circulation) in England (Pestell, 2005, 36).

A number of items of horse furniture, including bridle bits and stirrup-strap mounts (Williams, 1997), are an important category of Late Anglo-Saxon artefact for interpreting social identities at Bawsey. As Chapter 3 noted, the ability to move around the landscape on horseback is, by the Late Anglo-Saxon period, increasingly linked to the aristocratic pastime of hunting (Loveluck, 2009, 13). Finds of horse furniture, certainly by the Eleventh century (Ashley, 2002, 27), might therefore be considered indicative of an elite presence. These finds occur at other intensive case-study sites, for example Sedgeford (Poole in Davies, forthcoming, 189), but Bawsey is the only site where Middle Anglo-Saxon horse furniture has been recovered, perhaps indicating a very early emergence of aristocratic elite dynamics at this site.

Intriguingly, many of the stirrup mounts are decorated with Scandinavian art styles combined with elements of indigenous origin (Williams, 1997, 8), indicating varied conscious and subconscious displays of elite identity in relation to horse-borne activities. At Bawsey (as Chapter 3 suggested) this might indicate the emulation of certain aspects of Scandinavian identity through insular art (Margeson, 1993). Unfortunately, as all items of horse furniture from Bawsey are surface finds, further work is required before these artefacts can be definitively tied to Late Anglo-Saxon

elite identities. Clearly, although we might expect horse furniture to sometimes be lost during activities undertaken at a settlement (e.g. stabling) or a market focus (e.g horse-borne transaction or, the trading of horse furniture itself), surface finds might equally represent artefacts lost during riding/hunting in isolated landscape zones (Williams, 1997, 3).

The combination of functions represented by the lost Late Anglo-Saxon metalwork at NHER 25962 indicates a permanent settlement focus of continued importance, with a population utilising personal ornamentation, and despite the reduced visibility of the 'waterfront' zone, engaged in coin use and transactions (weight/ingot). This is confirmed by the additional presence of Thetford Ware, geophysical anomalies and excavated features. The additional recovery of ingots and a number of other Scandinavian influenced pieces of metalwork indicate the possible emergence of complex yet significantly transformed aspects of social identities formed in negotiation with external contacts. However, these observations are complicated by the fact that other items at Bawsey, such as Late Anglo-Saxon Trewhiddle brooches, remain very much 'Anglo-Saxon' in their form and art-style (Hinton, 2005, 116), and may have actually been produced at sites such as Bawsey (Hutcheson pers comm.). Furthermore, the evidence of Anglo-Saxon coinage at Bawsey provides another very different insight into the range of Late Anglo-Saxon contacts and influences.

## Coinage profile

There are presently 165 Anglo-Saxon coin finds from Bawsey. The assemblage, then comprising 124 coins, has previously been considered by Blackburn (2003, 20-36, and 2008, 34-36) and **Fig. 164** shows a breakdown of coinage by date-groups.

Coinage dating to the Early Anglo-Saxon period is restricted to the two mid-late Seventh century gold shillings of imprecise provenance discussed above. The presence of this rare early coinage has led to the suggestion that Bawsey played a 'similar economic role' to *emporia* sites established at the beginning of the Eighth

century, including *Hamwic* '(Blackburn, 2003, 32). Clearly this is a highly speculative statement, especially in the light of Metcalf's (2001, 50) argument that we are perhaps too quick to use coinage to identify centres of commercial activity, including *wics*.

Nevertheless, following the very early gold coins, the Middle Anglo-Saxon coin assemblage from Bawsey *is* abundant and highly significant, with prolific coin loss between c.700 and c. 750 (Blackburn, 2003, 29 Figure 3.4); some 73 coins by the latest assessment (Hutcheson pers. comm.) including some primary *sceattas* and many intermediate and secondary ones. However, as a cautionary note, metal-detector finds on a national basis also indicate a dramatic increase in coin-loss between c.700 and 750 (Blackburn 2003, 31-32). Chapter 3 highlighted this phenomenon in Norfolk, accompanied by a *flourit* in the loss of continental coinage indicative of pan-north-sea trade activity. So, even though the *quantity* of coin-loss at Bawsey is exceptional, the pattern of loss is not.

However, if we compare the trade/exchange contacts evident through the point of origin of the coins at Bawsey with patterns from other 'productive' sites, it is possible to make further observations about the nature of economic activity and potential site identity. Most notably, a much higher proportion of coinage at Bawsey is English in comparison to some other 'productive' sites, for example, the 'South Lincolnshire' site which features predominantly early and continental coinage (Blackburn, 2008, 35). Furthermore, roughly a third of Bawsey's coins, dated 680-750, appear to have been produced within the East Anglian kingdom (Hutcheson, 2006, 91). As Chapter 3 (**Fig.30**) shows, this is much higher than the regional average. In contrast, the proportion of Continental coinage is much closer to the Norfolk average.

Of the East Anglian coins dated between 680 and 760, Series R *sceattas*, possibly minted in Ipswich (Metcalf, 2000), dominate the assemblage. In contrast, only 3 Series Q *sceattas*, which Newman (1999) has postulated were minted at Ely and which Metcalf (2000) attributes to West Norfolk, have been recovered. Series BZ primary *sceattas* are also present at Bawsey; these coins have only been found along

the west Norfolk fen-edge (Abramson, 2006, 8). The BZ sceatta Type 29a has to date only been found at Bawsey, leading Hutcheson to suggest that it was minted here (Hutcheson, pers comm.).

As Chapter 3 noted, the political circumstances under which series Q and R *sceattas* coexisted over a long period of time in West Norfolk are obscure (Metcalf, 2000, 10). However, if the minting of Series R coinage was royally controlled, its relative abundance at Bawsey might signal that this site was an island of authority within a coastal West Norfolk otherwise '...with a degree of political independence...' (Metcalf, 2000.10). Interestingly, all of Bawsey's sceatta coinage is minted under the rule of just two East Anglian monarchs Aeldwulf (664-713) and Aelfwald (713-749). For Hutcheson, this perhaps indicated that *sceatta* loss at Bawsey was intrinsically linked to the payment of taxation during a period of successful rule (Hutcheson, 2006, 79-84).

However, in the light of Hutcheson's hypothesis, it is of further interest that the continental coins from Bawsey, dated 680-750, derive almost exclusively from Frisia (5 Series D from Frisia/Domburg, 12 series E Frisia/Rhinemouth, 2 Series E/D), the exception being a solitary sceat minted at Ribe (Series X). The strong link between Bawsey and Frisia, or at least the parts of the Rhinemouth and Northern France that these coins passed through, perhaps indicates that further choice or control was being exercised over certain aspects of trade/exchange. A hypothesis is that Frisian coinage at Bawsey might represent politically independent mercantile trade/exchange (Op Den Weld, 2008, 78), as opposed to royally controlled tax as represented by the Series R *sceattas*. Norfolk's Middle Anglo-Saxon imports of North French Blackware, concentrated along the northwest Norfolk coast, and contrasting with sites such as Norwich or Ipswich which have closer ceramic links to the Rhineland (Ayers, 2003), might also be considered to represent 'politically independent' trade/exchange in this way. This hypothesis means that coin finds at Bawsey may represent dual modes of circulation between 680 and 750. Such potential complexities in coin circulation have been noted by Naylor (2007) and, if confirmed by future analysis, have huge implications for interpreting the complex

social identities in play at Bawsey and, ultimately, how these groups might have affected the later trajectory of the site.

Following the abundant coin-loss up to c.740-75 there is a huge reduction from c.760 until the end of the Anglo-Saxon period (35 coins in total), although a slight recovery in the second half of the Tenth/Eleventh century mirrors the national picture (Metcalf, 2008, 36). Once again, however, we must be cautious with our interpretations. On a national scale coins did 'not change hands so frequently' following the Eighth century (Blackburn, 2003, 32), and we should not assume that commercial activities suffered as a result. Instead of a change of function or status at sites such as Bawsey, we might simply be seeing a change in the role of coinage (ibid. 31). In reality, the very fact that Bawsey *does* have coin-loss, particularly between the 870's and 970's, is highly significant (Hutcheson, 2007, 91), and enough for Blackburn (2003, 32) to consider a continuity in site functions until the Eleventh century.

However, what the post-750 coins from Bawsey do clearly indicate is a fundamental reorientation of markets and exchange networks. Firstly, of the 35 coins dated to between 750 and 1066, only 2 are East Anglian coins (Beonna (749-760) and Aethelweard (845-855)). This presents a very different picture to the preceding period of abundant coin loss, but also contrasts slightly with the Norfolk picture (see **Fig. 30**, Chapter 3) where more Carolingian coinage or East Anglian pennies are present. Secondly, no Northumbrian styca coinage is found at Bawsey, as is also the case at all other West Norfolk productive sites, even though these coins are increasingly lost in Norfolk. Thirdly, no Carolingian deniers, or indeed any continental coinage, are found at Bawsey in contrast to other case-study sites, such as Wormegay, Burnham or Sedgeford. These coins are increasingly viewed as having arrived at sites via Scandinavian controlled exchange networks (Storey, 2003, 254-255). Fourthly, no Danelaw issued coins are found, although 2 copper alloy ingots, traditionally regarded as Scandinavian-inspired trade tokens (Pestell, 2005, 36-37), have been recovered.

Instead, pre-870, coinage is coming from Kent (4 coins), and, overwhelmingly, Mercia (13 coins: seven of Offa (757-796), five of Coenwulf (796-821) and one of Beihtwulf (840-852)). No Danelaw issued coinage is present. Hutcheson has suggested that continued Late Anglo-Saxon coin-loss at West Norfolk sites indicates a degree of local continuity in administration of the region (Hutcheson, 2006, 93). In contrast to the upheavals observed at the *emporia* such as Ipswich by the Ninth century (Wade 1998, 96), Hutcheson argued that sites such as Bawsey remained as important centres for the collection of taxation or obligations (Hutcheson, 2006, 93). If Hutcheson were correct, on present evidence it would seem, initially, that it was largely Mercian coinage that was enabling this function at Bawsey. Thus, as well as indicating a reorientation of exchange networks, might the use of Mercian coinage, coupled with the absence of other coinage, reflect transforming political allegiances at Bawsey. Perhaps Bawsey becomes an increasingly controlled Late Anglo-Saxon site, now aligned towards the Mercian royal dynasty, and certainly outside of Scandinavian controlled or Scandinavian influenced networks. If this were the case, it might well have affected the later trajectory of a site. Later coinage of Late Anglo Saxon England (14 coins), only enough to evidence some form of continued presence on the site, starts with Alfred the Great and ends with Edward the Confessor. However, before drawing strong conclusions based only on coinage, it is important to remember the Scandinavian-influenced art work on Late Anglo-Saxon metalwork items interpretable as elite accoutrements (see above). Clearly there was a complex interplay of (presently) poorly understood elite identities at Bawsey, with both Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian elements observable.

## Evidence of Production

Evidence for craft, production and industry is underrepresented at the West Norfolk case-study sites, mostly because this material is not retrieved during amateur survey, and is difficult to date accurately as surface material (e.g Andrews, 1992, 21). However, at Bawsey, evidence for domestic production is certainly present, in the

form of surface finds of a Late Anglo-Saxon whetstone, and the aforementioned excavated bread oven and associated fired remains of Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon date.

Furthermore, surface finds of casting waste, crucibles and other metal working debris have also been recovered. These finds, in addition to two Late Anglo-Saxon copper alloy ingots which might represent either production or exchange, are particularly significant as they provide very rare evidence for specialist production. Unfortunately, they are undated, but given the overwhelmingly strong Middle–Late Saxon presence at NHER 25962, it can be postulated that this material is early medieval in date. These finds serve to remind us that coin and metalwork loss represent only one part of the exchange cycle and that social life at sites such as Bawsey may have been primarily focused around the production of tradable commodities, including craft, bulk and utilitarian items (Naylor, 2004,134).

## Late Anglo-Saxon and Medieval historical and archaeological background.

**Fig. 156**

By the time of Domesday Book (1086), Bawsey already appears to have been a minor place. In 1086 land at 'Bawsey', if this can be equated to NHER 25962, was held by Robert Malet, who held a carucate of land  forming a berewick of Glosthorpe, and Wulfgeat, a freeman, who held half a carucate of land in Bawsey and nearby Ashwicken of Count Alan (DB, 4: 149b). So, although the presence of smallholders, villagers, slaves, meadow, ploughs, mills, woodland, salthouses, oxen, pigs, sheep and goats indicate a diverse settled landscape, there is little that indicates an important settlement (DB, 4: 149b, 7: 153b). In particular, Wulfgeats holdings are only worth five shillings, a small total.

In addition to the continued Late Anglo-Saxon presence at NHER 25962, surface finds of Late Anglo-Saxon and medieval pottery from the southwest of Bawsey parish probably indicate a second Late Anglo-Saxon settlement around the ruins of St Michael's Church, Mintlyn (NHER 3410). Mintlyn is recorded in Domesday Book as 'Meltinga' (OE 'Myntel's people', NHER Anon), was held by Bishop William, and freemen, smallholders and a plough are recorded (DB 10:50). Two medieval moated sites are known in the parish, both are located away from the aforementioned settlement sites (NHER 5554). Sparse Medieval surface finds at NHER 25962 (5 findspots including only two coin findspots) confirm the early decline of the site (**Fig. 162**). The emergence of a more dispersed Late Anglo-Saxon to Anglo-Norman settlement pattern is a phenomenon observed at other Fen-edge sites, notably West Walton (Silvester, 1988, 92). Yet, in the case of Bawsey, this dispersal is accompanied by a dramatic reduction in the intensity and variety of activity at these foci in comparison to the preceding periods.

As noted in Chapter 4, a number of commentators feel that the decline of Bawsey is linked to the emergence of Lynn. The zig-zag shape of Bawsey parish suggests that it might have been 'carved out' from an earlier land unit perhaps even prior to Domesday. The projected former land unit includes the parishes of Gaywood and Mintlyn, which both contained manors belonging to the East Anglian Bishops (Pestell, 2003, 124). It is therefore possible that some of the functions of the 'productive' site at Bawsey, originally owned by the East Anglian bishops, were moved to Lynn at the end of the Eleventh century. This may have occurred in 1091 when Herbert de Losinga became the bishop and patronised the construction of St. Margaret's in Lynn, perhaps with the control of trade as a principle motive (Hutcheson, 2006, Pestell, 2003, 126). This idea is supported by the fact that Losinga's monastic cell at Gaywood was granted one carucate of bishop's demense for the maintenance of Lynn priory (Pestell, 2003, 126). Later evidence for tenurial links between Gaywood and Mintlyn (Bawsey) are seen in 1240, when Bishop William de Raleigh creates a park in Gaywood incorporating land in Mintlyn, only a kilometre north of the former 'productive' site at Bawsey (Pestell, 2003, 126).

# Chapter 11: West Walton

## Extensive Polygon Analysis: Early Anglo-Saxon

**Fig. 165**

The history of settlement and land use along the Fen-edge is characterised by a complex interaction between man and the environment. Archaeological fieldwork to date suggests that Anglo-Saxon settlement activity at West Walton was largely restricted to the roddon tops east of a sea bank. The place name 'Walton', probably means 'farmstead or village by the bank' (OE *w(e)all* + *tūn*) (Mills, 482, 2003); this apparently refers to the earthwork Sea Bank located immediately to the west and north of the later Anglo-Saxon site. An alternative interpretation of the place name is that 'Wal' is a surviving British word meaning 'foreigner', which by the Tenth century had come to mean 'slave' or 'serf' (Faith, 1997, 61). Although reminding us of the existence of slaves in Anglo-Saxon England (Hodges and Whitehouse, 1989, 128), this possible etymology remains obscure.

Earlier place-name commentators considered 'Walton' to refer to a Roman sea wall (Crowson et al, 2005, 204, CDEPN 649 DEPN 494-5). Recent explorations, however, have instead suggested that the Sea Bank monument is Late Anglo-Saxon (Eleventh century) in date (Crowson et al, 2005, 205) although a pre-Ninth century date has also been postulated (Hall and Coles, 1994, 127). Clearly, much of the marshland in the West Walton environs was too wet to exploit until at least the Eighth century (Rogerson, 2005, 32, 2003, 120). The creation of the sea bank in the intertidal salt marshes would then have made large tracts of agricultural land to its east free from seasonal inundation, as is suggested by Late Saxon features excavated at nearby Terrington St.Clement (Crowson et al, 2005, 205).

No items of Early Anglo-Saxon material culture have been firmly identified within the West Walton environs: two possible beads (NHER 18646), a vessel (NHER 25853) and a possible sherd of hand-built pottery (NHER 18958) may all represent misidentified elements relating to the much more visible Middle Anglo-Saxon settlement presence. The closest Early Anglo-Saxon activity focus is at Tilney St Lawrence, and this might be a seasonally occupied site (Crowson et al, 2005, 48-55).

It is therefore difficult to say anything about Early Anglo-Saxon settlement and land use in the vicinity of West Walton. We must be slightly cautious, however, that negative evidence is not taken to indicate a complete absence of settlement. Silvester demonstrated that the Roman period settlement evidence in West Walton, as indicated by pottery scatters, was heavily masked by later silts, particularly from the Sea Bank westwards (Silvester, 1985, 106-7). This possibility, coupled with the fact that Early Anglo-Saxon sites in the marshland may be extremely ephemeral (Crowson et al, 2005, 48-55), means that settlement evidence might await future discovery. In particular, it would be no surprise to find settlement activity along the corridors around as yet undiscovered Roman routeways, similar to the Fen Causeway (Penn, 2005, 31).

## Extensive Polygon Analysis and material culture profile: Middle Anglo-Saxon

**Fig. 166**

During the Middle Anglo-Saxon there is an apparently sudden genesis of settlement related activity in the vicinity of West Walton. As Chapter 3 demonstrated, this seems to be a phenomenon of the West Norfolk Marshland. Hamerow suggests that these pioneer sites represent numerous low status producer sites providing for inland estate centres (Hamerow, 2002, 150). However, as West Walton has a 'productive' signature, the interpretation of the origins of this Middle Saxon site(s) needs to set the potential for production against the probability that, at times, this

site also seems to have functioned as a centre of trade and exchange. This theme can be explored through a consideration of West Walton's material culture profile and settlement morphology.

There are at least three, and possibly four, discrete foci of Middle Anglo-Saxon activity in the environs of West Walton (**Fig. 167**). General activity, represented by surface finds of Ipswich Ware, can be said to cover, intermittently, a north-south band c.4km long from NHER 19047 to NHER 19040.

**NHER 19047**

**Fig. 167**

The most southerly activity focus is centred on NHER 19047, where there is no obvious roddon. Here, the Fenland survey observed a scatter of animal bone and pottery, including some Ipswich Ware (Silvester, Unpublished). Between 1991 and 2001, metal detecting recovered a number of Middle Anglo-Saxon objects including a coin (a series X *sceatta*), a dress component, a pin, a strap fitting, textile equipment, a token and a possible vessel. The Series X sceatta was minted in Ribe between 710 and 740 (Abramson, 2006, 15) and indicates, if not direct exchange, continental contact of some kind at this time.

The existing evidence hints at the possible presence of a settlement focus at NHER 19047, with a population using personal ornamentation and possibly engaged in coin use and textile production (although finds are scarce). Further work is required to resolve the relationship between this site and the 'productive' focus further to the north (NHER 18947), although the Fenland survey suggested that NHER 19047 is a discrete activity focus (Silvester, Unpublished). West of NHER 19047, only Ipswich Ware pottery has been recovered (NHER 28268) perhaps indicating cultivated land at the western extent of this activity focus.

**NHER 18947**

**Fig. 168**

At the western extent of the modern village nucleus, 500m north of the enigmatic focus at NHER 19047, lies the southern half of a focus of Middle Anglo-Saxon activity previously labelled as the 'productive site' (Rogerson, 2003,118-119). The northern half of this focus is centred on NHER 18951, and lies within a 300m radius of St Mary's Church.

At NHER 18947, a significant scatter of Ipswich Ware focussing on the southern arm of the main north to south aligned roddon was recovered by the Fenland Survey, but the pottery scatter was not plotted in detail (Silvester, 1988, 92, Fig. 69). Nevertheless, the concentrated Ipswich Ware scatter suggests use-related loss and not simply the cultivation of land. The survey also seems to have identified the western and southern sides of the surface artefact concentration. The northern extent around the village and church remains uninvestigated, although activity might merge with that at NHER 19951. Metal detecting undertaken between 1991 and 2004, although less systematic than the fieldwalking, has recovered small quantities of Middle Anglo-Saxon finds, including a dress component, a pin and a single coin. This coin is a Series G sceatta (710-25) of uncertain mint (possibly York) (Abramson, 2006, 15). Briquetage relating to salt production has also been found, although it is possible that this is medieval in date (**Fig. 171**).

Although the combined surface evidence strongly suggests a settlement focus utilising Ipswich Ware, personal ornamentation and engaged in coin use, the small quantities of metal artefacts mean that it is impossible to interpret accurately the potential status of this particular focus. The lack of further geophysical or sub-surface investigation means that it is also impossible to be certain that NHER 18947 is a permanent settlement focus and, although it speculated that this is the location of a later manor (Davison, 1996, 341), there is a small possibility that this is a site of seasonal occupation where transactions were occurring. However, when the NHER

18947 dataset is considered in conjunction with material to the north at NHER 18951/25853/18952 it gains significant interpretative potential.

**NHER 18951/25853/18952**

**Fig. 168**

The northern extent of the Middle Anglo-Saxon 'productive' site (Rogerson, 2003, 118-119) is focused on the north-south arm of the main roddon c.300m north of St. Mary's Church. On present evidence NHER 18951/25853/18952 does not appear to be contiguous with the church or the southern activity foci at NHER 18947 (Crowson 2005, 172). This activity focus was initially identified as a concentration of pottery and animal bone by the Fenland Survey in 1982-3. A detailed fieldwalking survey was subsequently undertaken, making this the best understood activity focus within the West Walton environs (Andrews, 1992, Fig. 4d). Regular searching with a metal-detector commenced in 1987 (Rogerson, 2003, 118).

The site as a whole is apparently Middle Anglo-Saxon in origin. The surface pottery scatter is mostly Ipswich Ware, while metal detected artefacts include six coins (four Series E *sceattas* (710-30), a Series Q *sceatt*a (715-30) and a single unidentified *sceatta*), dress components, a hooked tag, pins, a vessel and tweezers. The Series E *sceattas* are continental imports minted in Frisia, possibly Dorestad (Abramson, 2006, 11). In the environs of NHER 18951/25853/18952 finds relating to production activities have been found and include quernstone and briquetage, although it is possible that these are medieval in date. A spindle whorl of Middle Anglo-Saxon date provides putative evidence for textile manufacture.

Comparing the pottery and metalwork distributions - accepting the potential for unknown human and natural processes that led to the creation of the artefact scatter – allows for a number of observations to be made. The pottery scatter is largely focussed on the north-south aligned roddon top identified in 1982-3 (Silvester, 1988, 92) and the majority of metal artefacts are located to the eastern

side of the roddon. The location of these finds imply that both the roddon top and land further east were more suitable for human activity in the Middle Anglo-Saxon period, perhaps simply as it was drier here than to the west. Interestingly, the metal surface artefacts east of the roddon appear to form two main clusters with coin, pottery and metalwork finds to the south, but only metalwork finds towards the north. A third small cluster of metalwork (including a single coin) is located beyond the northern end of the roddon. From this evidence it is possible to speculate that there are discrete areas of differential artefact loss within this overall activity focus that might possibly relate to contrasting activity zones. In particular, the concentrated area of coin loss might indicate an area where transactions were taking place, while the concentrated pottery loss on the roddon top might represent an area reserved for production related activities.

The combination of functions represented by the lost material culture at NHER 18951/25853/18952 would usually lead to the conclusion that this activity focus is a permanent settlement of some importance, with a population utilising Ipswich Ware, personal ornamentation and engaged in coin use. However, in light of the discrete functional zonation indicated by the spatial analysis, and associated evidence of production, the permanence of the activity focus must remain conjectural. Instead, we might be looking at a surface signature resulting from repeated specialised activities, including transactions relating to on-site production, such as salt production. Without future geophysical survey or sub-surface investigation this question will remain unresolved.

**NHER 18942/18943: Ingleborough**

**Fig. 169, Fig. 170**

A kilometre north of the north main 'productive site' a further focus of Middle Anglo-Saxon activity is located on top of a prominent roddon crest (2.9-3.5m AOD) immediately south of the sea bank. This intriguing focus was originally identified during the Fenland survey as a discrete scatter of Ipswich Ware (and later Thetford-

type ware) in association with what was initially thought to be an artificial island, although subsequent follow-up evaluation showed that this was a natural topographic feature (Crowson et al, 2005, 172).

Sample excavation on a grid system revealed a number of sub-surface features on the central (and highest) part of the roddon, including ditches, pits and a hearth (or possible clamp kiln) (**Fig. 170**). Several Middle Anglo Saxon feature-fills contained banded deposits of charcoal-rich soil and marine silts, suggesting repeated episodes of flooding or marine incursions. Diagnostic structural or morphological elements were absent from the site, however, and it remains uncertain whether this was a site of seasonal occupation (Crowson et al, 2005, 178).

Middle Anglo-Saxon metalwork was absent from this site. Diagnostic material culture is restricted to Ipswich Ware pottery and, intriguingly, a sherd each of Middle Anglo-Saxon continental imports: Tating Ware and North French Blackware (Blinkhorn, 2005, 179). However, as Chapter 3 demonstrated, this might reflect coastal sites' ease of access to imported ceramics rather than elevated site status (Loveluck and Tys, 2006, 140-69).

The archaeo-environmental assemblage from the site revealed a number of interesting socio-economic aspects of the site. Firstly, plant macrofossils from Middle-Late Saxon features included crop processing residues of salt tolerant barley, indicating that the site (contrary to earlier thinking) might have had a mixed (as opposed to purely temporary pastoral) economy, although sheep and cattle predominate in the Middle-Late Saxon animal bone assemblage (Crowson et al, 2005, 188-9). Secondly, foramineral analysis demonstrated that the silt deposited in the Middle Saxon features was not formed under full marine, but rather brackish, conditions (Crowson et al., 2005, 189). Unfortunately, associated evidence for salt production was not forthcoming.

**NHER 19040/19041**

The final focus of Middle Anglo Saxon is situated on a roddon edge, 600 metres north of NHER 18943. Here, Ipswich Ware was recovered by the Fenland Survey atop a mound associated with Roman and Late Anglo-Saxon pottery. By Late Anglo-Saxon times this mound probably acted as a breakwater protruding from the Sea Bank. Marginal areas such as this (as is also the case with NHER 18943) would have been ideal locations for salt production, which requires intertidal conditions (Crowson et al, 2005, 189). Surface findspots of currently undated briquetage, a by-product of salt production, are widespread at West Walton (**Fig. 171**). It seems plausible that future systematic investigation at NHER 19040/19041 would recover Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon activity associated with salt production, although this remains conjectural. To corroborate this observation, commercial excavations recovered a 'pre-medieval' probable brine settling tank from here (Rose, Unpublished, 1999).

## Extensive Polygon Analysis and material culture profile: Late Anglo-Saxon and Medieval

**Fig. 172, Fig. 173**

There is sustained evidence for settlement and occupation in West Walton during the Late Anglo-Saxon and Medieval periods, and common finds-loss locations suggest a good degree of broad spatial continuity between the Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon occupation. Indeed, all of the areas where Ipswich Ware was recovered by the Fenland survey, except a small part of the spread at NHER 18947, also contain findspots of Late Anglo-Saxon Thetford Ware, including the dispersed focus at Ingleborough (NHER 18942/3).

Thetford Ware scatters further west (NHER18647) and north (NHER 18950) of the main Middle Anglo-Saxon activity focus around St. Mary's Church seem to indicate the gradual expansion and dispersal of settlement in the centuries leading up to the Norman Conquest (Silvester, 1988, 92). Crucially, Late Anglo-Saxon features at NHER 18947, located off the roddon-top at a lower level to Middle Anglo-Saxon features,

did *not* contain flood silts (ibid. 178). This suggests that Late Anglo-Saxon activity at NHER 18947 post-dated the construction of the Sea Bank. The conclusion is that the construction of the Sea Bank enabled settlement expansion, from sites initially occupied as seasonal stock grazing zones to permanent settlements (Silvester, 1988, 18).

Despite an apparent increase in the overall scale of settlement related activity during the Late Anglo-Saxon period, occupation is not characterised by abundant metalwork loss which would assist greatly in the interpretation of potential site function and status. For example, only four coins have been recovered that date to the Tenth and Eleventh centuries, as opposed to six coins that date to the period 710-740 alone. In this light, Late Anglo-Saxon metalwork, including horse furniture, dress components and coinage, recovered on the main site north of the church (NHER 18951) denotes this as an activity focus of special significance. However, as there is less Late Anglo-Saxon metalwork and coinage in regional circulation by Tenth century, the general lack of metalwork (and especially coinage) at West Walton need not necessarily indicate a decline in the overall status of the site. Instead, the nature of trade and exchange activities may have simply been transformed, with wealth now displayed in media that remain largely invisible in advance of excavation, such as impressive built structures or livestock rather than portable material culture (Loveluck, 2007b, 186-7).

Whether the potential Late Anglo-Saxon transformations at West Walton then also reflect a change in the nature of the administrative elite/s is less certain. Evaluations at NHER 18947, for example, recovered diagnostic Late Anglo-Saxon metalwork (including a Ringerike-style bridle cheek piece and a stirrup terminal) despite being situated in a peripheral area to the main 'productive' (Crowson et al, 2005, 187). This indicates at least some continued use of decorative metalwork across the wider Late Anglo-Saxon population. Furthermore, a glimpse of the continued existence of Late Anglo-Saxon trade is indicated by the recovery of Stamford and St. Neots Ware ceramics (*ibid* 186), during fieldwalking and trial excavation. These finds indicate that

at least the regional import of material from Lincolnshire followed on from more obvious earlier trade activity.

The Late Anglo-Saxon pattern of settlement expansion, but with reduced quantities of diagnostic metalwork, is continued into the medieval period (**Fig. 173**). At this time surface finds scatters are located at regular intervals between the main focus at NHER 25853/18952 and NHER 19040 to the north. This polyfocal settlement set-up, with surface material potentially relating to a number of activity foci, immediately demonstrates that the earlier Domesday Book evidence of two main manorial foci (see below) cannot be taken at face value; manors might themselves have had polyfocal activity. However, in advance of further fieldwork, it is at present impossible to comment further on the nature of these 'settlement' foci.

## Late Anglo-Saxon and medieval historical and archaeological background

The documentary history of West Walton starts with Domesday Book, 1086 (Silvester, 1988, 91), and is covered in great detail by both Little Domesday Book and the occasionally divergent Inquisitio Eliensis, a document, dated to after 1093, which gives particulars about the lands held or claimed by the Abbey of Ely (Darby, 1971, 98). In addition to some small holdings by freemen (for example, DB 1984, 20.4), a socio-economic peculiarity particular to East Anglia (Darby, 1971, 108), there were two main manors with sizeable holdings. Each manor was of four carucates and 100 acres, although some of this land may have fallen within the adjacent parishes of Walsoken and Walpole (Silvester, 1985, 109).

The first major manor was held before the Norman Conquest by the Abbey of Ely, which held a number of demesne manors in the West Norfolk fens, for example, at Walpole, Terrington and Tilney (Miller, 1951, 76-77). After the compilation of Domesday Book, Henry I created a bishopric at Ely in 1109 with Cambridgeshire as its diocese (*ibid* 75). As a result, a number of important fen manors, such as West Walton, became held by a bishopric adjacent to the one in which they were actually

located (Norwich) - this trend, however, might have sat well with earlier administrative organisation (Miller, 1952, 33). Pestell has hypothesised that West Walton was perhaps a centre within the quarter hundred of Wisbech (Pestell, 2003, 124). Wisbech, an important centre for trade from the Midlands to the sea by the time of Domesday Book (Pestell, 2003, 123-4), was gifted to the abbey of Ely in about 1016 (Miller, 1952, 31-33).

The second major manor was held before Domesday by William de Warrenne who gave his land to the Abbey of Lewes (Davison, 1996, 339).

In an analysis of the West Walton Domesday and later documentary evidence (*terriers* dating from the Fourteenth to the Seventeenth centuries), Alan Davison (1996, 339-343) attempted to locate the two manors of West Walton. He suggested that the Ely manor was located to the south of the village green and St. Mary's Church, whilst the Lewes manor was situated to the north (*ibid*). Archaeologically, a rectangular moat, perhaps the Lewes manor, is visible north of the church at NHER 18951, and is adjacent to Middle Anglo-Saxon activity (Silvester, 1988, Fig.69-71). No building has been observed to the south of the church (Davison, 1996, 342). A second building platform seemingly relating to a medieval moated enclosure is located over a kilometre east of St. Mary's Church at Priory Farm (NHER 18976), Davison suggested that this is not one of the two major manors (ibid., 341), but this might be the Lewes manor site (Silvester, 1985, 112). Clearly further investigation is needed to resolve such issues. At this stage it is interesting to note that, in Davison's arrangement, manors positioned on opposite sides of the village green would have enabled the two controlling forces in the parish to share the church rectory, weekly market and annual fair (Davison, 1996, 341). This is an especially interesting observation given that both northern and southern foci might have undocumented Middle Anglo-Saxon origins.

The potentially interesting picture of dynamic economic interactions between the two large manors in West Walton is further embellished if we consider some of the manorial assets. In particular, considering the manors had holdings of a similar size they have very different assets. As one example, the manor under ecclesiastical

control by Ely held 22 salt houses (DB 15, 4), whilst the Lewes manor only 1½ salthouses (although freemen appertaining to the manor held a further seven salthouses) (DB 8, 21). If the abundance of later medieval stock raising (particularly sheep) in the area (Silvester, 1985, 113) reflects the early importance of meat-production and export to the fen-edge economy (Rogerson, 2003, 121), the control of the means of meat preservation (salting) would have been an important asset. It is possible to imagine the ecclesiastical manor attempting to control this opportunity at the time of Domesday.

Following this theme, it is intriguing that the Lewes manor held 114 pigs, as opposed to 22 by the Ely manor. Pigs were raised primarily for their meat (Crabtree, 1996, 68), and if they were to be exported away from site might have required salting. In this instance, could we be looking at a reciprocal economic relationship between the two major manors, with one manor mainly involved in preserving meat and the other in raising it? Certainly, excavations at Wicken Bonhunt produced an animal bone assemblage that suggested that specialised raising (the 'production') of pigs might be a tenable primary function for a Middle Saxon estate centre engaged in trade and exchange (ibid, 70). Furthermore, freemen exploiting economic opportunities with their own salt-houses would no doubt have had to operate around or within this landscape of control. The salt industry was very important to the fen-edge settlements at the time of Domesday (Darby, 1971, 136). In this light, it is interesting that the tenurial links of West Walton looked further west, as opposed to east, hinting at the existence of complex inter-regional exchange networks.

# Chapter 12: Settlement dynamics and transformations in coastal West Norfolk, 450-1100 AD.

## Introduction

Although the survey of West Norfolk 'productive' sites and the rural centre at Sedgeford could never be described as complete, it has been systematic in the way that it has approached the 'history' of both settlement morphologies and material culture profiles. Its key findings have a huge effect on the interpretation of these West Norfolk sites. Following the detailed presentation of existing and newly collected data from the intensive case-study sites, we can now conclude by considering their significance, overall role and function within the wider landscape.

The surveys have shown conclusively that, behind the label 'productive' site, there are a number of vastly different settlement sites, with contrasting finds-loss signatures indicative of contrasting economic fortunes, chronological sequences and settlement layouts. Most importantly, by combining a study of material culture profiles and settlement morphologies, key observations can now be made concerning the transformation of 'productive' sites, and therefore social identities, over time. The case-study at Sedgeford suggests that similar transformations might also occur at unlabelled/undocumented sites. Given the diversity of the material lifestyles and habitation zones observed, the following site by site discussion can highlight a very wide variety of potential social identities, and in particular elite identities, that transform over time.

## Wormegay

The small amount of evidence for burial activity suggests that Wormegay 'island' was occupied intermittently during the Early Anglo-Saxon period, although a pot-sherd containing a stamped impression of an eel or *wyrm* (Rogerson and Ashley, 2008, 433-434) provides early evidence for the site being linked to a local identity. The 'sense of isolation' (Silvester, 1988, 146) around Wormegay 'island' may have had a direct influence on the character and trajectory of settlement upon it, and the range of exploitable resources in the area certainly would have, as evidenced by the later importance of fisheries (ibid., 148).

Extensive analysis demonstrated that the main site in Wormegay is a discrete activity focus with sudden Middle Anglo-Saxon origins located on the southwest side of the 'island' around the now isolated church of St. Michael. Chapter 3 demonstrated that 'pioneer' sites such as this, encroaching onto previously marginal landscapes, are a phenomenon of the Norfolk fenland, perhaps indicative of an emerging set-up of estate centres and 'lower-order' settlements implanted by elite authority (Hamerow, 2002, 150; Rogerson, 2005, 32-3).

A consideration of the non-ferrous metalwork and coinage from the main site at Wormegay appears to fit with the commonly argued 'productive' site scheme characterised by a sharp decline in activity during the Ninth century (Blackburn, 2003, 29, Fig. 3.4). However, when observations from fieldwalking were combined with plotted distributions of metal detector finds at the main site, it was possible to explore the true dynamics of this apparently short-lived site. A concentrated scatter of Ipswich Ware indicating use-related loss (as opposed to agricultural cultivation) indicated either a habitation focus or a site of contact/exchange.
Metal finds had a slightly contrasting area of core discard, indicating that their loss was not subject to the same discard mechanisms as the pottery. Further functional zoning was tentatively indicated by sherd free areas containing human bone, indicating a burial or cemetery focus. The quantities of pottery and metalwork,

combined with the diverse range of activities represented, indicate a permanent habitation focus.

Certain artefactual material shed further light onto settlement character. A high proportion of dress pins might reflect the presence of a ploughed-out cemetery (as at Sedgeford), which might argue for an ecclesiastical or even 'monastic' (Rogerson, 2003, 120) elite presence. However, although the presence of styli indicates at least a degree of status, contemporary documentary evidence from Carolingian Europe shows that literacy was certainly not always restricted to ecclesiastical sites (McKitterick, 1989, 133-134). The presence of coinage, although not of an exceptional nature, indicates a degree of continental, national and regional trade/exchange. The latest dated coin, a denier of Louis the Pious (814-40 AD) perhaps indicates a transformation in exchange networks and Scandinavian influence towards the end of the settlement's life. Unfortunately, little other material, with the possible exception of the Ipswich Ware, provides good evidence for datable production related activities, as scatters of metalworking slag and geophysical anomalies interpreted as kilns or ovens remain undated. Yet, as Fourteenth century documents indicate, it is felt that production relating to the exploitable resources would have been an important aspect of the settlement's identity (a heronry and fisheries for example are mentioned).

When the geophysical survey was undertaken it became possible to review the relationship between identified boundaries and artefact scatters and make further important observations. Most noticeably, intense areas of geophysical anomalies were found to define the extent of some of the concentrated metalwork and pottery scatters, suggesting that they are directly associated with them and therefore of Middle Anglo-Saxon date. Key features included the main settlement boundary ditches indicating a planned rectilinear unit from the outset; the later church sits in the south west corner of this. Settlement boundaries of similar morphology have been identified at Seventh century sites at West Stow, Suffolk (West, 2001, 1985, 151) and Foxley, Wiltshire (Hinchcliffe, 1986, 1995, 40-1) although these sites, both interpreted as secular activity foci, are of contrasting status (Reynolds, 2003, 103-

115). A degree of superimposition and alteration to these and other internal boundaries over time is also apparent, suggesting the ongoing negotiation of social relationships. Another boundary might well define a contemporary burial zone. A potential route-way (possibly Roman) may have provided an important focus for trade and exchange and the Middle Anglo-Saxon site might even have been deliberately positioned at this point to control movement through the landscape.

In conclusion, it is possible to imagine the Middle Anglo-Saxon settlement at Wormegay as, if not a site of primary exchange, then perhaps a contact centre between different strata of society: the provisioned elite and the producers. Whether the elite exerted control in the form of tax over the producers is a further interpretative leap, although the site's potential control of an established route-way might suggest this. Previous discussions of Wormegay have cited the short-lived sequence and topography of the site as evidence of monastic use (Rogerson, 2003, 121), and this seems plausible, although many pieces of evidence could also be used to argue for a 'secular' presence. The topographic setting of the site is similar to probable monastic sites at Butley (Fenwick, 1984) and Iken (West *et al*., 1984).

In the Late Anglo-Saxon period, both extensive and intensive analysis showed that although there is continued activity around the main site on Wormegay 'island', it is reduced. The meagre Domesday entry for Wormegay suggests an early decline for the site, and the construction of a motte and bailey at the western extent of Wormegay 'island' suggests that settlement activity had moved away from the Middle Anglo-Saxon site by the Anglo-Norman period.

However, the most important finding of the geophysical survey was the identification of a second, apparently later, phase of land use, indicated by sub-circular buried enclosure ditches. The main identified sub-circular boundary, covering an Ipswich Ware free area towards the church, is morphologically comparable to settlement boundaries identified at Goltho, Lincolnshire interpreted as an early manorial enclosure (Beresford, 1987) or Bramford, Suffolk (Reynolds, 1999, 144), where a larger enclosure (c.100m x 80m) is dated to the Middle-Late

Anglo-Saxon period (Caruth 1995, 40-1) and interpreted as the settlement of a freeman (Loveluck, 2009). These findings provide an interesting context for Ninth century finds recovered from close to this potentially late settlement enclosure, including a 'handful' of Thetford Ware sherds, a debased Borre style Anglo-Scandinavian brooch, fragments of oval brooches within an area of human bone indicative of a Scandinavian-style burial, and an undated gold ingot.

The final phase of occupation at Wormegay might be characterised by a short-lived and potentially greatly transformed phase of settlement activity - perhaps even the secularisation of a previously ecclesiastical site - which ends abruptly during the later Ninth century. Only further excavation work would be able to decide. However, a potential context for the changes observed is a transformation in the elite identity and that**,** instead of Middle Anglo-Saxon abandonment, Wormegay represents a site that was annexed and `shared out', as the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* put it, by Guthrum's Viking army after the creation of the Danelaw in 878 (Rogerson, 1998), but then did not survive Edward the Elder's re-conquest of East Anglia in 918. In this context, the apparent lack of access to or consumption of Thetford-type ware at Wormegay is especially interesting; perhaps indicating that certain sites were not integrated into the production and consumption network of this particular commodity. This could indicate that something had changed in the ability of the site to control the fen route-ways, or to police its provisioning, ultimately leading to its abandonment.

Perhaps this interpretative sketch pushes the available evidence too far, but the Wormegay case-study does certainly show us that settlement transformations were possible even at short lived 'pioneer' sites between the Seventh and Ninth centuries. Within this debate, the exact identity of elite control in the landscape is still a matter of some conjecture. Yet, the evidence from Wormegay strongly indicates that we should expect transformation to these identities over time.

## Congham (with Grimston)

If the distribution of Early Anglo-Saxon cemetery-related material is taken to reflect the maximum extent of potential settlement, then occupation at Congham must be considered extensive. The impression is that the cemetery activity, and perhaps therefore associated settlement, is either polyfocal or that the spatial variation reflects chronological distinctions in burial activity. The best candidate for an Early Anglo-Saxon settlement focus lies at the western extremity of the observed artefact scatter at Congham North, although burials are also in evidence.

It is perhaps possible to envisage the Early Anglo-Saxon settlement area at Congham North as comparable to an excavated site such as Barton Court Farm, Oxfordshire, dated to the Fifth and Sixth centuries (Miles, 1986). As such, it is important that this area is adjacent to both a communication route (the 'Icknield way') and a Roman Villa. Unfortunately, due to the conflation of cemetery and settlement evidence, it is at present impossible to assess with any confidence the existence of a possible early site of rural exchange, as at Barham, Suffolk (Newman, 2003, 97-110). What can be said from the evidence of continental coinage is that there was certainly external contact of some kind at this time, and that there certainly *was* a pre-existing settlement context for the Middle Anglo-Saxon occupation, perhaps even an early estate centre of uncertain nature as envisaged by Carver (1989, 141-158).

At Griston, like Congham, a potential Early Anglo-Saxon settlement/cemetery focus has also been located in the environs of a former Roman villa (Smallwood, 1997). However, in contrast to Congham, this activity focus seems to be much more discrete, and, although this may be a product of uneven recovery, it is tempting to postulate from the available evidence that the contrasting Grimston and Congham surface signatures are an early reflection of the two-tiered settlement hierarchy as suggested by the place name evidence; with Grims*ton* very much subsidiary to Cong*ham* at this date.

Chapter 3 demonstrated that Early Anglo-Saxon activity foci which continue as Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon settlements are certainly present in inland locations in West Norfolk and they often develop into centres of some significance. This appears to be the case at both Grimston and Congham and, although the early presence and later trajectories are vastly different for the two sites, both of them can certainly be contrasted with a number of pioneer settlements of wide ranging status that emerge *de novo* in Middle Anglo-Saxon Norfolk, such as Wormegay, Bawsey, Whisonsett (Mellor, 2004) and the Fen-Edge sites (Crowson, 2005).

In the Middle Anglo-Saxon period, although there certainly was a 'market focus' (defined by abundant metal detector evidence denoting trade and exchange) at Congham, there were at least two main foci within the overall settlement spread; the 'market'/settlement at Congham North and a settlement at Congham South. A greater degree of economic activity is evidenced at Congham North, a focus that may well have had origins in the Early Saxon period (including high status burials), while the settlement debris at Congham South seems to indicate a new development.

Congham North's activity focus is restricted to the southern half of NHER 25765 (see Chapter 6), where geophysical survey suggested the potential for dynamic replacements of boundary features but *within* the context of a stable settlement focus, as at West Heslerton (Powlesland, 2000). The settlement zone may have been based on an oval enclosure of c.3 hectares, incorporating the area around the later church which, if deliberately planned, perhaps indicates a coercing elite presence during the foundation of the settlement. Importantly, the survey suggests that the 'market' focus was adjacent to, but not within, the proposed settlement focus, perhaps indicating that one activity focus was positioned to take advantage of the other.

At Congham South, the wide variety of functions represented by surface finds, in addition to an excavated building, indicate an emergent settlement focus of some importance, possibly an estate centre. If exploiting the range of environmental

niches indicated by the later parochial structure, this potential estate centre may have had direct jurisdiction over a considerable immediate territory. It is not inconceivable that this is the site of an elite focus, as envisaged by Hamerow (2002), which would have been a consumer site in receipt of 'cattle and salt' from specialised 'producer' settlements, such as at Walpole St. Andrew and West Walton (Crowson *et al*., 2005, 174). Hamerow suggests that these estate centres were 'probably monasteries' (2002, 150), although Andrews prefers to see them as existing under royal control (Andrews, 1992, 16).

It is currently impossible to make an accurate identification of the Middle Anglo-Saxon elite presence at the Congham North and South settlement foci. However, it is interesting to interpret the settlements (especially that at Congham North) in the light of the possible pre-existence of an early site of rural exchange, and an emergent landscape of control. It seems possible that the emergence of these elite foci/estate centres was in order to, in some way, control and take advantage of the existing market focus. Perhaps, as Verhulst has postulated, this occurred because the political and social conditions in Middle Anglo-Saxon Norfolk enabled the transactions of merchants or freemen, gift exchange or commerce, to be subjected to tolls by local agents such as 'manorial lords' (2002, 88).

In the light of the above speculation, it is also interesting to consider the nature of the twinned 'market'/settlement (Congham North) and settlement (Congham South) foci in the light of their Late Anglo-Saxon development. Firstly, the continued existence of both foci suggests some continued success of whatever economic relationships bound them together. An apparent complete drop-off in coin loss at Congham North between 750 AD and 880 AD is a common feature at a number of sites (Metcalf, 1988), perhaps because of a changing use of money at this time (Metcalf, 2003, 31), rather than an abandonment of economic activity. The presence of Scandinavian influenced metalwork and Danelaw minted coinage indicates that the settlements (particularly Congham South) were able to thrive, despite wider economic and political upheaval in the Ninth century.

There are also further indications of changes to the functional nature of the settlement foci in the Tenth century. For example, the emergence of a possible church and associated burial ground at Congham South; this might reflect an emergent secular proprietorial church or an ecclesiastical settlement. Thus, although it is uncertain what type of elite identity and control is represented at Congham South it is certainly of a transformed character, as was the case at the excavated estate centre at Flixborough, Humberside (Loveluck, 2007b, 155).

However, changing functionality at Tenth century Congham is best evidenced by the emergence of a short-lived phase of conspicuous production. For example, a pottery production focus at the west of Congham North, producing Grimston-Thetford Ware, and finds of a lead trial piece and a silver ingot which might represent ingot production for the purpose of exchange, as at Norwich (Emery, 2007, 43). This short-lived *flourit* of production may have occurred within a context of elite control, possibly administered from the emergent ecclesiastical focus. At the very least, during the Tenth century, the overall material signature of Congham switches between two of Whyman's (2002, 100-102) proposed settlement classes, from a site with evidence of artefact discard comparable to emporia but without evidence of production (as at North Elmham; Wade-Martins, 1980 a and b) to a short lived site with both artefact production and discard, although certainly not on the scale of the *emporia*. We must now explain *why* this was an apparently short lived endeavour.

By the time of Domesday Book (1086), Congham was an unexceptional settlement almost wholly owned by William de Warenne (DB 8, 26-27). Thus, although the settlement can never be said to have 'failed' along the lines of a Wharram Percy, Yorkshire (Hurst and Beresford, 1990) or 'abandoned' as is possible at Sedgeford, Norfolk (Cabot *et al.*, 2004), it may be postulated that pottery production was an ill planned response to a gradual economic decline during the Eleventh century. In order to explain this slow decline, we must also consider the settlement focus at Grimston.

The Early and Middle Anglo-Saxon settlement focus at Grimston is spatially discrete compared to the sprawling activity foci at Congham. The Middle Anglo-Saxon surface signature - including Eighth century coinage, a stylus, brooches and Ipswich Ware pottery - indicates a thriving multifunctional settlement focus (as at Congham south) but, most importantly, there is no obvious 'market' focus. It therefore seems logical that many early wares produced at Grimston would need to have passed through Congham. Why then was there (apparently) no economic mechanism by which Congham could benefit from the emergent pottery production at Grimston?

A possible hypothesis is that Grimston was occupied, owned and administered in a contrasting way to Congham. Whereas at Congham elite control over economic activities, as explored via the interaction between 'market' and settlement foci, appears great, perhaps the lack of a Middle Anglo-Saxon 'market' focus at Grimston resulted in a relative *lack* of economic control, providing a catalyst for its later economic successes. Within this observation it is therefore interesting to note that, before Domesday, Grimston was partly held by two *freewomen* (DB 8,25); there were also freemen who owned land in both Congham and Grimston (DB, 27) implying some tenurial complexity.

It is therefore not impossible to imagine the Middle Anglo-Saxon settlement at Grimston (NHER 3579), as the settlement of a freeman - perhaps similar to excavated sites observed at Bramford, Suffolk (Reynolds, 1999) or even Whissonsett, Norfolk (Trimble, 2006) - deliberately placed to take advantage of the 'market' focus at Congham, but outside its jurisdiction. Thus, although these freemen might still have had obligations to more powerful landowners (Faith, 1997 and see Congham DB 51, 2), this situation might have provided a climate of relative economic freedom, and, as the tenth century progressed, drew specialist potters to Grimston, resulting in the new settlement focus at Pott Row.

The Pott Row settlement, initially outside strict elite control, was perhaps able, in an entrepreneurial way, to exploit an economic niche that Congham could not compete with. Thus, the success of Pott Row may have been a factor, not only in development

of the settlement at Grimston, but also a major contributory factor in the decline of Congham. As Grimston became a highly successful production centre of the Eleventh century, it is possible that new contemporary elites asserted their control over the hitherto free trade that the settlement may have enjoyed, as evidenced by the transformed Norman ownership listed in Domesday Book (1086).

## Rudham

The watershed boundary at the source of the Wensum made the Rudham environs an area of geographical significance from an early date. Three sub-circular geophysical anomalies adjacent to St. Peter's church, West Rudham, are potentially prehistoric ring-ditches reused for pagan Anglo-Saxon burials, and the Romano-British presence in the area may have encouraged excellent communication in the form of route-ways. Unfortunately, as archaeological evidence is mostly limited to metal-detected surface finds, our knowledge of any Early Anglo-Saxon settlement presence in the area is limited. For example, at the site of the later 'productive' site in East Rudham, it is uncertain if Seventh century weapon related items (a pyramid sword mount and a shield mount) indicate a high-status cemetery or an early market focus (as at Congham).

During the Early Anglo-Saxon period, the area later occupied by East and West Rudham was certainly a focus of at least three (and possibly five) separate burial grounds. It might tentatively be suggested that there are differences in status and chronology between the East and West Rudham cemetery signatures. For example, burial evidence in the West Rudham area is dominated by Fifth and Sixth century material, where social stratification is hard to ascertain. In contrast, Seventh century material at East Rudham might indicate high status-cremation burial, and a Frankish belt plate hints at accompanying evolving spheres of exchange or political influence. However, whether these observations can then be said to provide a 'pre-echo' of the contrasting settlement development that we see in the twin occupation foci of West and East Rudham from the Middle Anglo-Saxon period is somewhat conjectural.

By the Middle Anglo-Saxon period surface finds evidence indicates that the settlement and occupation in the Rudham environs is polyfocal, with at least two clear finds loss foci visible in West Rudham parish and East Rudham parish, 1.4km to the east. In East Rudham one area of Early Anglo-Saxon finds loss is abandoned, with concentrated activity now restricted to the 'productive' site (ER) a kilometre to the west. In West Rudham the main area of finds loss might itself be dividable into two discrete activity foci (WR1 and WR2) located east of the present north-south aligned road, and north of the main east-west road through the present-day villages respectively. At WR1 an Early Anglo-Saxon activity focus continues into the Middle Anglo-Saxon period (WR1) but with finds loss patterns notably transformed. Whereas at WR2 a site of consistent but unexceptional Early Anglo-Saxon finds loss is transformed into an important area of Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon finds loss. Yet, as these sites are mainly represented by metal detected finds, how 'real' these observed patterns are is a matter for future investigative research.

At present, however all Middle Anglo-Saxon finds loss foci appear to have a spatial relationship with the later strung-out villages of East and West Rudham. Accepting the caveats about the representativeness of the evidence, we must start to ask *why* we see a partial Middle Anglo-Saxon shift to a pattern of nucleated and stable occupation within the Rudham environs. We can begin to address this question by assessing the existing material culture profiles and settlement morphologies from the known Middle Anglo-Saxon activity foci (ER, WR1 and WR2).

At East Rudham (ER), the surface evidence reveals a population using personal ornamentation, including elite artefacts with Carolingian affiliations, and engaged in continental coin use. Interestingly, no coins have been recovered north of the main road, where a relatively wide range of personal metalwork and pottery indicative of settlement focus has been recovered, perhaps indicating some functional zoning. A Middle Anglo-Saxon presence of some status might also be indicated to the north and west of St. Mary's church.

At West Rudham 2, north of the main road, the quantity and variety of Middle Anglo-Saxon objects (including pottery) indicates a permanent settlement focus. The surface assemblage here is dominated by personal metalwork, including a Carolingian strap distributor perhaps reflecting early Scandinavian influences, with only a single Frisian coin recovered. Unfortunately, the finds have not been plotted in detail so making further speculations concerning the presence of intra-site functional zones is presently impossible

In contrast at West Rudham 1, finds of personal metalwork and continental coinage are abundant and varied, indicating that this was a focus of trade/exchange with a population utilising personal ornamentation of some status. In addition, artefactual finds are concentrated in a tight linear strip, possibly reflecting an early route-way. However, whilst additional scatters of Ipswich Ware pottery suggest that West Rudham 1 might be a site of trade/exchange with some habitation areas, it is perhaps more likely that the main settlement areas lie to the north and east beneath the present-day settlement and also at West Rudham 2.

Concluding the Middle Anglo-Saxon evidence, the polyfocal nature of the West/East Rudham site, comprising two permanent settlement foci (ER and WR2), and a site of trade and exchange (WR1) where geophysical surveys did not recover prominent settlement enclosure, is highly significant. This demonstrates that more than one Middle Anglo-Saxon settlement focus possessing inhabitants involved in trade and exchange related activities might be located almost adjacent to one another, perhaps competing for the same resources and economic niches.

Late Anglo-Saxon material mostly occurs in the same locations as the Middle Anglo-Saxon finds, confirming a degree of settlement nucleation and stability from the Eighth century onwards. Furthermore, the previously discrete surface artefact scatters at West Rudham 2 and West Rudham 1 merge into a somewhat coalesced spread of material, perhaps indicating an expansion of concentrated activity in the area. Finds are now lost in previously peripheral areas, such as around the later documented location of Coxford Priory. Given the tumultuous contemporary political

context of Scandinavian conquest and rule in the Tenth century it is interesting that, at a macro-spatial scale at least, this settlement agglomeration is sustained throughout the Late Anglo-Saxon period and into later medieval times. However, this is only half the picture. By looking at the surface evidence in detail, and by comparing and contrasting the material culture profiles, it is possible to argue tentatively for some key transformations at individual activity foci and hypothesise about how these Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon foci might have interacted.

The site immediately east of St. Peter's church continues (ER) into the Late Anglo-Saxon period. At this time finds are dominated by personal metalwork, with occasional functional metal objects but no recorded iron objects. Additional surface pottery perhaps indicates a permanent settlement focus, but surface recovery has not been prolific enough to ascertain functional zones. The emergence of new Scandinavian or Anglo-Scandinavian identities is perhaps indicated by the presence of a bird brooch of Viking type, Borre style brooches, and an Arabic dirham (c.900-950 AD). Increasing later documentary and cropmark evidence for religious institutions in the environs of the site - the Domesday churches, Coxford priory and St Mary's Priory (founded c.1140 AD) - suggests that ecclesiastical authority had an important part to play in the later trajectory of the site. Perhaps East Rudham always existed as a tightly controlled high-status settlement focus.

Yet, while it is possible to see the development of East Rudham within a context of strict elite control, a rather more complex dynamic is at play at Late Anglo-Saxon West Rudham. There seems to be some functional differences between the two proposed activity foci. Finds clusters at West Rudham are dominated by functional objects - including high status horse furniture and coinage - perhaps indicating trade, exchange and status-display related activities as opposed to a habitation focus alone. In contrast, as with the Middle Anglo-Saxon site, West Rudham 2 has a multifunctional material culture profile, perhaps more indicative of a buried settlement zone of some status. If quantities of finds loss can be considered in any way meaningful then Late Anglo-Saxon West Rudham 2 seems to rise in prominence as West Rudham 1 experiences decline, perhaps reflecting a Middle Anglo-Saxon

market/ settlement (WR1) and a settlement (WR2) being replaced by a Late Anglo-Saxon multifunctional and competing set-up, with a degree of market activity at both foci. Such a phenomenon, of a manorial centre and outlying estates (the Domesday *berewicks*), has been held by Williamson to be as early as the Ninth century (1993, 73-104). However, establishing how 'real' these observed patterns are is something that future investigative research must resolve.

Finally, the discovery of a hoard of lead and iron objects at West Rudham 2 in broad association with other high-status finds of portable personal metalwork is also of great interest. Here we are perhaps observing the contrasting acts of different contemporary social groups - hoarding versus conspicuous consumption - at the same activity focus. This indicates a complex settlement identity and might provide a context for the strong Scandinavian/Anglo-Scandinavian artistic influences indicated by the Ninth and Tenth century artefacts here. Indeed, the presence of decorative Scandinavian metalwork at both East Rudham and West Rudham 1/ 2 might suggest the emergence of new late Anglo-Saxon/Anglo-Scandinavian elite identities. In this respect, it is interesting that the Rudhams appear to prosper whereas a site like Wormegay appears to fail.

Clearly future work is required to address some of the speculation surrounding the Rudhams. However, at this stage it is clear, even within an overall settlement set-up characterised by stability into the later medieval period, that a detailed consideration of individual surface artefact scatters can indicate some important intra-site transformations during the Anglo-Saxon period.

## Burnham

As with the Rudham, the main 'productive' site at Burnham is only one functioning element within a complex occupied landscape. Early Anglo-Saxon material, predominantly cemetery-related, is widespread from the Fifth century onwards. Activity may have been encouraged by the pre-existence of a north-south aligned Romano-British route-way east of the main sites (Chester-Kadwell, 2009, 158-9),

while a possible settlement focus in Burnham Norton was presumably attracted to the 'safe haven' provided by the confluence of the Goose Beck and River Burn (Godwin, 2003).

Early-Anglo Saxon cemetery evidence is particularly abundant around the later 'productive' site itself, with an additional shorter-lived focus c. 500m to the west. Prehistoric barrows may have provided a pre-existing context for burials. These burial grounds north and south of the Goose Beck would have created a significant point in the landscape that, combined with a landing place, might have acted as a social 'magnet' for a significant Middle Anglo-Saxon site.

However, it is at present uncertain that there is any functional continuity between the Early and Middle Anglo-Saxon occupation at the main 'productive' site. Early Anglo-Saxon pottery and geophysical anomalies possibly indicative of Sunken Feature Buildings south of the Beck, spatially removed from the cemetery evidence further southwest, possibly indicate an Early Anglo-Saxon settlement focus. These features closely correlate with the observed Middle Anglo-Saxon metalwork/pottery scatter in this area, indicating that there might be land-use continuities between the Early and Middle Anglo-Saxon periods. If this is the case, as at Congham, we might be looking at a Middle Anglo-Saxon settlement of some importance with origins in the Early Anglo-Saxon period. This sits uncomfortably with shifting settlement theories as defined in the Mucking model (Hamerow, 1993).

By the Middle Anglo-Saxon period, although excavations and surface finds indicate subsidiary settlement foci at Burnham Norton and Burnham Thorpe, the important 'productive' site is increasingly visible. The site, located on a blind harbour north and south of the Goose Beck, is an ideally situated landing place and trading site, as evidenced by a concentrated zone of Middle Anglo-Saxon coin and metalwork loss abutting a probable waterfront (Godwin, 2003). Importantly, fieldwalking, geophysical survey and detailed plotting of metal detector finds has enabled us to place the trade and exchange evidence within a more fully characterised Middle-Late Anglo Saxon activity focus, with areas of permanent settlement indicated from the

Middle Anglo-Saxon period until the Twelfth century. This work also allows us to narrate transformations at the overall focus with a far greater degree of subtlety. One of the most unexpected findings was the recovery of quite different settlement morphologies, indicating contrasting functional zones with contrasting chronologies, north and south of the beck.

Survey south of the Goose Beck fieldwalking identified an intense area of Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon pottery discard indicative of a settlement zone, as well as a less intense pottery scatter, indicative of agricultural cultivation and denoting the southern and eastern extent of the site. The extent of land-use remained largely consistent between the Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon periods, although there was increased artefact discard near the waterfront in the Late Anglo-Saxon period. The presence of geophysical anomalies indicative of a large enclosure and associated droveway, closely mirrored by the distribution of Late Anglo-Saxon Thetford Ware, indicates intensive occupation at this time. Unfortunately, firm evidence of habitation zones is less tangible. The wide distribution of surface pottery and, particularly, dark soil and shell, seems to suggest the presence of surface rubbish middens, which might suggest communal living arrangements (Loveluck, 2001, 89; Reynolds, 2003, 130).

South of the Goose Beck, Middle Anglo-Saxon metal finds were infrequent and, although Late Anglo-Saxon metal finds were more common, there were no obvious concentrations of material. North of the Beck, however, a close correspondence was found between concentrated Middle Anglo-Saxon artefacts (especially coins) in the waterfront area and areas of rectilinear geophysical anomalies indicative of buried boundary ditches. These finds clearly indicate settlement focus with at least two phases of planned land-use. A Roman date for the earlier phase of land use is not impossible, but a number of features align to existing routes in the modern village landscape suggesting an Anglo-Saxon date: perhaps Middle Anglo-Saxon features with a Late Anglo-Saxon re-planning.

Morphologically, the geophysical anomalies north of the beck seem to indicate a planned settlement similar to Wicken Bonhunt (Essex) or Cottenham (Cambs) (Mortimer 2000; Wade 1980). Wicken Bonhunt was considered a high status secular site and, in this context, the Ninth century Royal Ville of *Bruna* attested to in the Twelfth century might be a candidate for the settlement remains here (Pestell, 2003). However, if an elite focus has indeed been identified at the north of the Beck, this should not necessarily lead to the conclusion that this is a homogenous secular manorial focus. Instead, the evident transformations in material culture indicated between the zones of metalwork loss north and south of the Goose Beck can provide a more detailed narrative of both intra-settlement dynamics and wider social change.

North of the Beck, abundant Middle Anglo-Saxon metal finds, with a heavy coinage presence but almost no functional objects, are replaced by infrequent Late Anglo-Saxon metal finds but with multiple functions represented. While south of the Beck, Middle Anglo-Saxon metal finds are extremely infrequent but Late Anglo-Saxon metal finds are abundant, multifunctional and almost exclusively diagnostic to the Tenth century with strong Scandinavian influence (including strap ends, Viking disc brooches, a Trefoil brooch, a Viking Borre style brooch, a Borre-derived style brooch and an Arab dirham). The fact that Middle Anglo-Saxon coin loss is almost exclusive to the north side of the Beck immediately indicates vastly different occupation strategies between the two sides of the Beck. North of the Beck we might well be looking at a Middle Anglo-Saxon administrative (perhaps manorial) centre, where the act of payment or taxation of traded goods took place, whilst south bank activity was apparently restricted to (now less visible) activities such as, at a trading site, the loading and unloading of bulk goods.

Concluding description of the 'productive' site at Burnham, important research questions remain. In particular, it is uncertain whether the trade/exchange focus indicated by Middle Anglo-Saxon metalwork north of the Beck relates directly to the geophysical features of the probable manorial focus, and therefore elite control, from the outset. An alternative hypothesis is that this functional zone starts as an

unregulated site of exchange that then acquires a controlling focus. This seems an important question as the site then fails to develop into a prominent Late Anglo-Saxon focus of trade/exchange. Leaving aside the possibility that the settlement failed to develop because of environmental changes, like the river channel silting-up, as at Ulph Place (Penn, 1999), the nature of both the settlement and control of exchange may have played an important part in this apparent decline. A working hypothesis might be that areas both north and south of the Beck, ideally placed for taking advantage of important trade routes, start as unregulated sites of exchange which, at some point, it becomes desirable to control.

Whatever the explanatory sequence to the north, by the Tenth century, an unexceptional area of settlement south of the Beck is transformed into a focus of trade/exchange which was most likely under Scandinavian control or influence. Establishing whether this activity focus was then in direct competition with the settlement north of the Beck is a further important question for future research to answer. Although at present conjectural, a scenario might be imagined where a waterfront was granted to a new Anglo-Scandinavian elite by an insecure Anglo-Saxon figurehead; this endeavour appears relatively short lived. Interestingly, the latest Anglo-Saxon coin finds in Burnham are the three post-West Saxon re-conquest monarchs. These coin finds might indicate the cessation of Scandinavian influence on material culture use at the 'productive' site.

Despite uncertainties over the sequence of events and the identity of the elite presence at the 'productive' site, concentrated activity certainly appears to cease by the Twelfth century, perhaps when Burnham *Market* itself rose to prominence and trade networks start to be dominated by urban foci (Penn, 2005, 72-73). However, Domesday Book (1086) seems to indicate that even by the Late Anglo-Saxon period fundamental changes had already occurred to the settlement landscape of the wider Burnham environs. For example, Burnhams Overy and Thorpe, both subsidiary settlements judging by place-name evidence, were the two most important manors. The complex remains at Creake Road, Burnham Sutton, provide further indications of intense Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon land-use apparently discrete from the 'productive'

site. In short, the present evidence suggests a Middle Anglo-Saxon elite controlled estate that was quite quickly broken into smaller components during the Late Anglo-Saxon period, for example the district around St. Clement's Church, Burnham Overy (Pestell, 2003, 127-128), perhaps by Royal decree to secular or ecclesiastical elites. In this respect, it is fascinating that immediately prior to Domesday an unnamed estate and Burnham Thorpe were held by freemen with Scandinavian names and all estates were carucated, a potentially Anglo-Scandinavian unit of land division (Hart, 1992). These documented transformations provide an excellent context for the Scandinavian influence that we see via the artefactual evidence.

## Sedgeford

The existence of north-south route-ways across an easily fordable Heacham River, such as the 'Icknield Way' or the Roman Peddars Way, was evidently an important stimulus for early occupation in the Sedgeford environs. Unfortunately, despite the diverse Early Anglo-Saxon burial evidence, including cremations and inhumations reflecting contrasting chronologies, status and ethnicity, little can be said of a possible earlier settlement presence. Indeed, more obvious candidates for Early Anglo-Saxon settlement foci lie further to the west towards the coast around the villages of Snettisham and Heacham.

From the start of the Eighth century an apparently *de novo* settlement and Christian cemetery emerges south of the river, which fits models of early settlement nucleation rather well (Arnold and Wardle, 1981, 145-149). However, detailed survey and excavation of this activity focus has provided a much more complex picture of the origins of this Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon site.

Geophysical survey suggests that the main settlement area is planned from the outset around large linear ditches, as at North Elmham (Wade-Martins, 1980), and apparently also incorporates a large stock enclosure. This degree of planning seems to indicate the presence of a social elite group - perhaps only a small group - able to organise or enforce collective action and therefore implement new forms of social

relationship (Saunders, 2000, 216-217). Further evidence of a controlling elite is also suggested by the presence of a large cemetery at the new settlement. The dynamic cemetery sequence indicates that there was pressure on available land and that it was desirable to use certain parts of the cemetery for burial at certain times, perhaps indicating that individuals were attempting to associate themselves with a status focus (such as a church). Social differentiation might also be indicated by contrasting contemporary burial practices (coffin and shroud burials) within a single cemetery.

The excavated material culture profile can also be used to interpret the broad character of the Middle Anglo-Saxon settlement. Again, a degree of elite presence is indicated by conspicuous consumption in the form of decorated vessel glass and personal ornamentation. The presence of styli also indicates a high status (literate) presence, although not necessarily an ecclesiastical elite (McKitterick, 1989, 133-134). However, a strong production/subsistence element is also present in the form of processed bread wheat, ovens and quern stones. Evidently there was a range of individuals carrying out different activities at Middle Anglo-Saxon Sedgeford and the settlement's economy may have been rooted in production. The Middle Anglo-Saxon animal bone assemblage suggests that wool production might have been an important aspect of the economy, which might point towards an ecclesiastical elite (Poole, forthcoming). Trade and exchange, including either direct or indirect trade with the continent, was also a growing aspect of settlement function, if not identity, as time progressed, as evidenced by the rare coinage dated between c.755 AD and 874 AD and an imported Rhinish lava quern. The presence of Ipswich Ware and Thetford Ware also seems to indicate a *flourit* of commercial activity in the Ninth century.

Despite uncertainties surrounding the identification of the Middle Anglo-Saxon elite presence at Sedgeford, it is clear that there are some important Late Anglo-Saxon period transformations at the site. Most obviously, geophysical survey and excavation indicated morphological transformations at the settlement site, including the introduction of droveways perhaps denoting a transformation in the animal

economy of the site. At the Boneyard cemetery more subtle transformations are also indicated by the apparent abandonment of parts of the cemetery and the introduction of large drainage ditches that truncate earlier burials.

Morphological transformations are also accompanied by changes in the material culture profile of the settlement; most noticeably evidence of conspicuous consumption is replaced by functional/agricultural iron objects. However, upon closer inspection, items of personal ornamentation (iron buckles) and artefacts denoting elite status activities (horse furniture) do indicate a continued, but perhaps transformed, elite presence at Late Anglo-Saxon Sedgeford. Indeed, the animal bone assemblage, increasingly dominated by cattle and wild mammals, seems to indicate the emergence of a consuming secular elite (Poole, forthcoming). It might be the case that the emergence of a Late Anglo-Saxon secularised elite at Sedgeford was an important factor in the early abandonment of the single Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon settlement and cemetery site, and its replacement with a number of dispersed foci, including the West Hall hamlet, by the Eleventh century. The presence of a Viking issue St. Edmund memorial penny (c.895-910 AD) also reminds us that settlement transformations were occurring at a time when there was Scandinavian/Anglo-Scandinavian influence in the rural landscape of East Anglia.

It is impossible to say conclusively if the abandonment of the Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon settlement and cemetery at Sedgeford is a gradual or sudden transformation. However, Domesday Book seems to paint a picture of early settlement complexity at Sedgeford. Even prior to the Conquest, Sedgeford had many estates (DB 10, 20), indicating multiple ownership with an outlier at Fring and a separate ville at Gnatingdon. The presence of a large number of freemen in Domesday Book is also interesting as this situation is not so common in this part of Norfolk and has been interpreted as reflecting areas where there were opportunities for economic expansion, possibly during the Anglo-Scandinavian period (Williamson and Skipper, 2005, 41). If this proposed model is believed, we might see Sedgeford as a Middle Anglo-Saxon focus under exclusive ownership that gradually came to be shared out between a number of early landowners during the Late Anglo-Saxon period.

Archaeologically, West Hall is the most visible of the later 'outlying' settlements and, along with other potentially specialised settlement foci (such as Eaton), seems to indicate an early and gradual break-up of the Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon estate set-up (although Eleventh century artefacts at the former Boneyard/Chalkpit settlement site might indicate some continued activity here). However, the later tenurial complexity (three later documented medieval manors) and the proximity of the parish church to West Hall also points to the possibility of a sudden creation of Late Anglo-Saxon manorial settlements. This evidence, combined with the very definite Late Anglo-Saxon transformations at the Boneyard-Reeddam site could be used to argue for sudden, politically inspired change. Yet, what evidence there is for trade and exchange seems (atypically) to indicate economic continuity as opposed to change until the Tenth century. How typical Sedgeford might be of any generalised pattern will only be substantiated by the future systematic investigation of non-'productive' sites in Norfolk. As Chapter 3 hinted, it would be no surprise to recover many 'low-order' sites with dynamic settlement sequences and associated trade and exchange evidence.

## Bawsey

From obscure Early Anglo-Saxon beginnings, albeit one with possible settlement or even trade evidence, Bawsey became a prominent Middle Anglo-Saxon site involved in trade and exchange. In all likelihood, this took the form of a multifunctional settlement, including foci for trading, occupation (defined by a discrete enclosure ditch) and probably production as well. Although the exact settlement morphology is presently uncertain, a degree of planning at the initial Middle Anglo-Saxon settlement is indicated, as at North Elmham (Wade Martins, 1980), as the construction of the main enclosure ditch was a large investment in its own right.

The most important observed aspect of the Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon settlement morphology was the apparent distinction between the 'main enclosure' area, where settlement, burial and production took place, and the putative 'waterfront' zone,

where artefacts indicative of trade and exchange are lost in abundance, particularly between c.680 and c.750 AD. As a result of this observation, instead of simply labelling the site as a potential emporium (Blackburn, 2003, 32), we can use aspects of settlement morphology and portable material culture to characterise a more detailed settlement sequence indicative of transforming and perhaps competing social identities. Here, establishing the sequence between the 'main enclosure' and 'waterfront' zones is crucial; to discover whether they emerge contemporaneously or one after the other.

In his developmental sequence of *emporia*, Hodges' (1982, 50-52) suggested seasonal trading sites (Type A *emporia*) emerged first, and were replaced by permanent sites, incorporating planned streets and specialised production zones which allowed royal elites to monopolise trade and exchange in luxury goods (Type B *emporia*). However, the chronological relationship between the 'waterfront' (Type A) zone and the planned enclosure (Type B) zone at Bawsey remains obscure. Existing evidence (Ipswich Ware from the main ditch) would tend to indicate that both trading site and planned/controlled settlement focus emerged at roughly the same time, despite the dominance of early finds in the 'waterfront' area. This blurs the traditional development sequence proposed by Hodges so it is impossible to establish if the Early-Middle Anglo-Saxon site emerged within a context of unregulated or tight (perhaps royal) elite control. Certainly the *emporia* label cannot easily be used here.

Despite uncertainties concerning the morphological sequence, the identity of the elite presence that provided the 'guiding hand' at Bawsey can be further interrogated via the material culture profile. The abundance of coin-loss, 680-750 AD, suggests strong ties to the Kingdom of East Anglia, perhaps indicating the influence of a royal elite. However, in contrast, the combined evidence of Middle Anglo-Saxon Christian burials, styli and later documentary associations might indicate that the founding elite had an earlier ecclesiastical association. Perhaps, in the case of Bawsey, we should simply accept the diverse and transitory nature of Anglo-Saxon elites (Loveluck, 2007a, 164). In this context, it is perhaps worth

referring to Bede's complaint in his letter to Archbishop Ecgbert of York (dated 734) that laymen paid Northumbrian kings to grant them *territoria* on which to build false monasteries (Whitelock, 1979, 695, Wickham, 2005, 317). Indeed, it is quite possible that Middle Anglo-Saxon Bawsey contained both ecclesiastical and secular activity foci. The possible presence of contrasting contemporary elites at a single settlement focus might even provide an appropriate context for later administrative tensions at the site. Furthermore, as Chapter 3 argued, perhaps the presence of both East Anglian and Frisian coins at Bawsey indicates that both controlled and unregulated exchange was occurring at the site indicating the interaction of landed social elites with groups such as merchants.

Although the nature of the elite identities at Middle Anglo-Saxon Bawsey are at present uncertain, it is clear from the material culture evidence (if not the settlement morphology) that there were important transformations as time progressed. Post-750 AD, the coin evidence indicates a reorientation of exchange networks coinciding with a time when transformations in both market forces and attitudes to luxury/wealth were also in flux, for example, animals now come to be regarded as commodities (Albarella, 2006; O'Connor, 1994). A reliance on Mercian coinage at this time might well reflect the continued alignment of political allegiances at Bawsey towards Anglo-Saxon royal dynasties. Hutcheson has also suggested that the 'main enclosure' ditch was perhaps re-cut as a burgh style ditch, during the Tenth century (2006, 103 and pers comm.), with closer morphological parallels to Norwich and Thetford than to other rural sites.

If Late Anglo-Saxon Bawsey was aligned towards the Anglo-Saxon royal dynasties, an absence of coinage with Scandinavian connexions might also reflect a shunning of these allegiances (although there are ingots). Yet, the presence of certain aspects of Anglo-Scandinavian elite identity such as horse furniture might indicate otherwise. However, the central problem in interpreting portable artefacts is the context of surface finds: the horse furniture could represent a passing rider as much as an aspect of settlement identity. A further problem is that Scandinavian inspired horse furniture might have been utilised by different elements of society from those who

used coinage. For example, Margeson has suggested that much Late Anglo-Saxon metalwork was of lower status than originally suggested (Margeson, 1996, 1997). Clearly further work is needed to establish the chronology and context of finds at Bawsey as, for instance, much horse furniture is Eleventh century, before assessing the apparent Late Anglo-Saxon transformations in elite identities.

What is apparent, however, is that Bawsey had failed by the Twelfth century. The argument that Bawsey was ecclesiastically administered in the Eleventh century, and that Herbert De Losinga moved the remaining functions of this focus to the plantation town at Lynn is persuasive. However, it is intriguing to note that Losinga possibly created St. Margaret's (the mother church in Kings Lynn) at the *request* of traders (Parker, 1971, 1). Bearing this in mind, and noting the potential interplay of a diverse range of Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon social identities evidenced by the archaeological data at Bawsey, it might eventually be possible to observe material signatures relating to multiple tiers of society, and not only ecclesiastical elites in the foundation of Kings Lynn itself? The role and 'material signature' of the freeman or the merchant is under explored (Loveluck, 2009, 3-6), but perhaps an important one to investigate in this case.

## West Walton

The Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon site at West Walton is one of several apparently regularly spaced sites along the coastal marshland. In general, these ceramically prolific sites are seen to be 'producer' sites originating in the Middle Anglo-Saxon period with an economy based on intensive pastoral/arable farming and salt extraction, initially on a seasonal basis (Rogerson, 2005, 32). Where access to fishing or fowling opportunities and the potential for salt production was good, the marshland sites are seen to have developed into permanent settlements (Crowson, 2005, 205). It has been suggested that the common functional profiles and the regular spacing of the sites points to firm control of the fen-edge settlements from above (Rogerson, 2005, 32). This fits the traditional *emporia* model, where the

driving forces behind social change were royal elites who controlled exchange (Hodges, 1982, 197).

West Walton, however, is different. As the only 'productive' site within the marshland arc, it can be placed together with a growing number of rural centres, contemporary with the *emporia,* that emerged by the Eighth century to become engaged in both production and trade, presumably administered by local elites. Excavations at West Walton have now shown the possibility of trade and exchange evidence sitting within a complex mixed farming economy, although evidence for elite controlled specialised production is harder to see, apart from in the Domesday evidence. Metal finds now being recovered from a previously unexceptional fenland site with similar communication potential at Outwell  further reinforces the need for us to work towards the creation of more nuanced models for the origins and administration of settlement and economy in the Norfolk fens by a variety of administrative elites (see Chapter 3).

Having considered the existing evidence in detail, we can now draw some tentative conclusions concerning the nature of control over economic activities at West Walton. It is clear that the availability of exploitable natural resources and potential for communication were important factors for the origins of the site. The polyfocal nature of the site from the outset suggests that topographical and environmental constraints and opportunities at least partly dictated the settlement morphology. ,It therefore seems plausible that West Walton originated as an unregulated site of exchange, something perhaps observable through the later freeman element within Domesday Book. In this respect finds of two different types of imported ceramics need not denote elite status or control, but might instead reflect a distinctive coastal attitude to certain commodities (Loveluck and Tys, 2006, 142; see Chapter 3).

However, around the later church, concentrated coin and metalwork loss from the Middle Anglo-Saxon period onwards makes it easier to suggest a discrete focus of control here, if not from the outset, then certainly by the Eighth century. Coin loss, with many other rural sites in Norfolk and East Anglia, was most abundant during a short period between 710 and 740 AD. This appears to be a time of pan-European

economic boom, which might have encouraged the formation of local elites exploiting marginal landscapes. By the Eighth century it might have been the case that it was best to have one or two prominent foci at West Walton for regulating exchange instead of many dispersed foci.

Without further detailed work at specific activity foci we can only guess the identity of any Middle Anglo-Saxon administrative elites at West Walton. However, two possibilities have already been suggested in the Late Anglo-Saxon period. Pestell favours the allegiance of West Walton to the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of Ely (Pestell, 2003, 124) and Blackburn *et al.* (Unpublished, 2000) hints that the settlement was associated with a later Anglo-Saxon *villa regalis* (Naylor, 2004, 132). Interestingly, both interpretations regard any potentially controlling elite living at West Walton as subsidiary to a larger central authority. In support of this notion, a number of surrounding place names featuring the 'wal-' element (e.g. Walsoken, Walpole) perhaps indicate an earlier estate that was subsequently broken up. The early importance of the sea defence (*or*, tentatively, slavery, serfdom or foreigner (Faith, 1997, 61)), in the hypothetical estate name might provide an interpretative clue to the character or activities of this elite presence.

The construction of the Sea Bank by the Eleventh century, a project requiring collective elite co-ordination (Crowson, 2005, 205), provided an impetus for settlement expansion, perhaps from seasonal stock grazing zones to permanent settlement in West Walton (Silvester, 1988, 18). However, even though the overall occupied area at Late Anglo-Saxon West Walton appears to expand, there is less obvious evidence for trade and exchange related activities (with the exception of continued activity close to the later church). Perhaps the apparent transformations at West Walton might be interpreted as the transition from a multi functional settlement/site of exchange to a more inward looking settlement focussed on specialised production. Interestingly, Pestell suggests that the implantation of Wisbech in the Eleventh century, arguably the hundredal centre to which West Walton was attached, represented the repositioning of earlier, more fluid, sites of trade and exchange that exploited less stable fen-edge havens (Pestell, 2003, 123-

4).The emergence of Kings Lynn in combination with the decline of Bawsey could perhaps also be interpreted in this way (Hutcheson, 2006).

## The West Norfolk sites: Conclusion

In conclusion, Early Anglo-Saxon settlement in West Norfolk is hard to observe from the surface evidence alone. However, early coinage and associated settlement signatures indicated at sites such as Congham, suggests that sites that develop into Middle Anglo-Saxon estate centres might have had early Seventh century (or even earlier) origins. This supports increasing, Europe-wide, conclusions concerning the early emergence of rural centres (Loveluck, 2005; forthcoming).

In the Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon periods, various types of site emerge and develop in very different ways to form the Anglo-Norman landscape. At Rudham, there are two or even three settlement foci, with indications that the fortunes of the competing manorial centres were intertwined. At Wormegay, the short-lived settlement sequence is highly complex, with a monastic site transformed into a late Ninth century, possibly Scandinavian-controlled, manorial centre. Whereas Burnham, a Middle Anglo-Saxon site of primary exchange that does not exist for long out of manorial control, experiences notable transformations in the Tenth century, perhaps also as the result of having a Scandinavian elite. In contrast, a site like Bawsey might start initially as an unregulated site of exchange before acquiring a more structuring elite focus. Understanding the interplay of both ‘free’ and ‘controlled’ trade/exchange at these sites is an important future research goal.

Interpretation from surface-survey data alone may push the reasonable limits of inference. Even so, follow-up trial trenching at Sedgeford has shown that, even at undocumented sites, survey followed by trial excavation can add precision to surface observations, allowing us to interpret transformations at rural centres. In the case of Sedgeford, the biological profile suggests that the site changes from a putative Middle Anglo-Saxon ecclesiastical centre to a Late Anglo-Saxon secular centre.

However, this transformation might have taken place gradually over the Ninth and Tenth centuries. Perhaps, on further reading of Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*, where '...ecclesiastical and secular elites were different sides of the same coin...' (Loveluck, 2007a, 154), we should accept the transitory nature of elites and not always expect a clear distinction between them in the material world.

In short, all the evidence across the various landscape zones of West Norfolk point to a complex picture of settlement, where rural centres emerge early and where elite transformations are the norm over time. This picture of rural settlement diversity provides a frame of reference for a study of some of the key issues in West Norfolk, a sub-region that remained unurbanised until the Twelfth century despite having an above-average population in the Late Anglo-Saxon period (Williamson and Skipper, 1993, 2005, 38-39). For example, the nature of control at the site at Bawsey, which might have experienced similar Tenth century transformations to the sites discussed above but which ultimately declines in the Twelfth century, could be further explored, as could similar issues at the fen-edge sites proposed as being engaged in specialist production.

What can be said, finally, is that this work shows that upgraded metal-detector datasets are extraordinarily useful for interpreting changing social identities. Especially in Norfolk where other traditional indicators, such as imported ceramics, are not abundant (Hutcheson, 2006; Blinkhorn, 1999), any indicators of long-distance trade and exchange should be welcome for their analytical potential. The results of this work indicate that future further systematic and integrated surveys in many regions of Europe, could recover a picture of diversity, complexity and changing lifestyles.

However, in advance of new integrated surveys, we can already consider the significance of the patterns recovered during the West Norfolk study within a wider synthesis of emerging and existing evidence in East Anglia, Anglo-Saxon England and Continental Europe. At this stage, despite the vastly divergent levels of data available for comparative analysis, we might still attempt to address some important themes.

Most urgently, we might discover how typical is the complexity and diversity of settlement identities observed in West Norfolk of other regions. In addition, the West Norfolk work has been very successful in identifying transformations over time, however, this may simply be because we have only narrated in detail a collection of atypical sites that fail and see populations move away by the Twelfth century. Perhaps many similar sites are to be found in modern built-up zones but are simply impossible to sample systematically. These are some of the themes that the concluding chapter, through the interpretative lens of West Norfolk, will now aim to address.

# Chapter 13: Wider implications from the West Norfolk surveys. Understanding coastal settlements in a North Sea context

The preceding discussion of the West Norfolk case-studies suggested a number of important themes concerning the interpretation of those surveyed sites. Crucially, the methodology employed identified a number of contrasting settlement morphologies and associated material culture profiles which allowed the sites to be identified as permanent settlements populated by a range of social groups, including rural elites. Having drawn some initial parallels with other sites, the key observations from the case-studies now need to be addressed in the context of common and contrasting patterns in East Anglia, Anglo-Saxon England and northern North Sea Europe.

**What does surface material culture represent? Settlement diversity and its implications**

All sites considered in the West Norfolk survey had metalwork scatters directly associated with heavy pottery scatters. Metalwork scatters were additionally associated with undated scatters of animal bone/oyster shell and, in the case of Wormegay, human bone. Upon investigation, the artefact scatters were also found to be associated with concentrated geophysical anomalies, often indicating boundaries with superimposition and alteration over time. Where artefact scatters and geophysical anomalies correlate like this, it is justifiable to suggest that a permanent habitation focus existed rather than a seasonal market or fair. This interpretation is supported by the fact that coinage is only ever a lesser component of the overall metalwork assemblage in comparison to personal and functional metalwork more indicative of standard settlement debris at the fieldwork sites (**Fig.**

**174**). The trial evaluation at Sedgeford, which revealed settlement features, also supports this interpretation.

Even at a basic level then, the West Norfolk survey has helped us to alter our perception and approach to the significance of 'productive' sites. Instead of concentrating solely on the importance of surface metalwork scatter sites for illuminating economic themes, we are now required to highlight and consider a number of other aspects of the sites and their social role. We can now recognise that, in Anglo-Saxon England, 'productive' sites represent a variety of different sites with complex and permanent settlement histories. This is corroborated at Cottam, E. Yorks (Richards, 2003) or Melton Ross, Lincs (Leahy, 2003), where detailed site investigation demonstrated that both sites were permanent settlements. Additionally, as with the West Norfolk sites, the possibility of observing settlement transformations that might reflect changes in social identities over time was also noted at Cottam (Richards, 2003, 160-61).

This combined evidence suggests that we must no longer categorise or interpret 'productive' sites separately from the many other investigated surface artefact scatter sites which also represent permanent multifunctional settlements. Interestingly, this approach has already been applied to Danish 'productive' sites. At the Sixth to Eleventh century site at Lake Tissø, both a manor *and* a market site were identified from surface artefacts (subsequently excavated) and the site was then placed in a complex, fairly rigid, hierarchy of rural sites (Jørgeson, 2003, 175-207). In addition, there must now be a suspicion that certain sites located during transect based fieldwalking, but not interpreted further, might actually feature important trade and exchange evidence given further investigation, such as systematic metal detecting. For example, the settlement at Barton Bendish (Norfolk), where Late Anglo-Saxon period Arabic coins have been recovered, but which is currently interpreted as a polyfocal hamlet precursor to a 'normal' village (Rogerson et al 1997).

One possible barrier to further interpretation in cases such as Barton Bendish might be that, without the application of intensive grid-based fieldwalking, authors might not feel confident enough to reconstruct use of site space. For example, the East Anglia Kingdom survey in South East Suffolk identified numerous settlement foci of the Early Anglo-Saxon period onwards (Newman, 2006) yet even though intriguing phenomena were observed, such as the emergence of new sites in the Ninth century, it was only at Rendlesham, where detailed grid-based fieldwalking was undertaken, that questions of site status were addressed (Newman, 1992, 1994).

Recent years have seen more successful interpretations of surface-find sites come from intensive fieldwalking projects that take a broader approach, with a start-point away from 'productive' site debates. For example, the projects at Shapwick, Somerset (Gerrard, with Aston, 2007), Raunds, N.Hants (Parry, 2006), and Whittlewood, Bucks/N.Hants (Jones and Page, 2006) have all successfully explored settlement evolution in the rural landscape including intra-site dynamics: functional zones and use of space. If combined with metal detecting data, such intensive fieldwalking projects have a powerful potential to re-orientate debates permitting discussion of rural settlement evolution *including* metalwork signatures, instead of commencing with the metalwork and moving outwards. Newman's exemplars at Barham and Coddenham, Suffolk (Newman, 1999, 2003), demonstrate that this is entirely possible for many sites in Anglo-Saxon England and that the West Norfolk sites are not exceptional in this respect. In short, intensive integrated surveys, by looking at detailed patterns of artefact discard and geophysical anomalies, can identify real functional zones at sites and changes to these over time, which can then be linked to site characterisation and status.

**Beyond Nucleation and Dispersal**

Before looking at variations in functional zones, one of the key findings of the West Norfolk surveys was the identification of a number of apparently 'stable' settlements, at least from their point of origin up until the Twelfth century when the

pull of new planned villages led to further nucleation and abandonment of previous sites. At Burnham, Congham and Rudham a high proportion of Early Anglo-Saxon metalwork findspots were noted (Bawsey also had a noteworthy presence), with metalwork assemblages heavily biased towards personal metalwork indicating ploughed-out cemeteries (Chester-Kadwell 2009, 74, Figs 6.9 a/b). The impressive quantities and diverse range of metalwork certainly identify these sites as locations that were already important established nodes in the settled landscape prior to the Seventh century. The strong cemetery signatures might also indicate the close proximity of early settlement foci (Penn et al, 2007, 11) although it was impossible to attribute geophysical anomalies to Early Anglo-Saxon activity except perhaps at Burnham. All these sites were overlaid by Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon settlements.

These observations clearly challenge older models of settlement evolution (Chapter 2), characterised by a linear progression from dispersed to nucleated settlements, with dispersed (or 'unstable') settlements reflecting a more egalitarian or free society in the Fifth to Seventh centuries (Hamerow, 1991, 1-5 and 1993). However, subsequent work (e.g. West Heslerton; Powlesland, 2000, 19–26) argued for a stability of settlement form from the Fifth century onwards at certain sites, supporting the speculative notion of an early 'manorial' system, comprising an estate landscape of both tenants and lords, in East Anglia (Carver, 1989, 156). It is argued that, through the lens of surface evidence, we are seeing exactly this phenomenon at Burnham, Congham and Rudham, with a stability of overall settlement location from the Early Anglo-Saxon period onwards, perhaps even with possible reference to a Romano-British landscape (Penn, 2005, 30). Similar situations have been noted by other detailed field surveys, for example, at Witton, North East Norfolk (Lawson, 1983). In this light, certain excavated settlements in Norfolk (one being Red Castle Furze, Thetford; Andrews, 1995), instead of developing from dispersed to nucleated settlements, might now be reinterpreted as simply featuring shifting functional zones within a stable settlement location.

Outside Anglo-Saxon England, although there have been fewer field surveys, stable settlements of an early date are now starting to appear in several parts of southern

North Sea Europe. Complex hierarchies of significant sites, particularly in coastal zones, acting as central places and involved in long distance trade, are emerging in Northern France and the Low Countries (Loveluck and Tys, 2006, 142). For example, around Leffinge, West Flanders, surface collection of pottery and subsequent geophysical and geochemical prospection, identified a number of enclosed hamlets (Loveluck and Tys, 2006; Tys, 2003). At Wilskerke-Haerdepollemswal several hundred sherds of pottery, along with enclosures, were recovered, with a sequence dating from c.500 – 1600 (Loveluck, forthcoming, 12). Observations like this, in common with the West Norfolk survey, help to challenge previous models which characterised the majority of early medieval settlements of the Fifth to Seventh centuries as wandering settlements (*Wandersiedlungen*) with a similar set of attributed assumptions to the Anglo-Saxon dispersed settlements (Hamerow, 1991, 6). In addition, a number of recent re-interpretations of settlements in Scandinavia have also begun to question the previous characterisation of certain sites as 'wandering', for example, at Vorbasse, Jutland, Denmark (Holst, 2004; Roesdahl, 1998, 97).

Furthermore, where excavations have been possible there are growing signs that rural elite centres - not only stable hamlets - existed as early as the Fifth or Sixth centuries in parts of Europe. For example, in Denmark, Gudme, Funen (Neilsen et al, 1991, 67-72) and Sorte Muld, Bornholm (Watt, 1991, 89-107) are both stable polyfocal settlements featuring abundant metalwork and both pagan religious and elite activity foci. This is an important observation as previous studies have sometimes suggested that estate centres were either unstable or did not exist prior to the Seventh century (Loveluck, 2010/11). Further sub-surface investigation at the West Norfolk sites at Burnham, Congham and Rudham (and potentially Bawsey) might well demonstrate that all the sites fit this new model. Unfortunately, because less metal detecting has been undertaken in many regions on the continent - it is illegal in Belgium or France, for example - we are deprived of an important tool for evaluating site status in the absence of excavation. Instead, other material culture, such as imported pottery, has become an important tool for assessing access to

commodity and therefore the changing character of lifestyle at these surface find sites (Loveluck, Tys, Davies and Deckers, in prep).

In contrast to the sites discussed above, case-study sites at West Walton, Wormegay and Sedgeford cannot be characterised as settlement foci with extended stable sequences. Both Wormegay and West Walton fall into the category of 'pioneer' sites, as defined in Chapter 3. These sites, of apparently small nuclei, were founded at the start of the Middle Anglo-Saxon period, either under the control of pre-existing estates, or as an entrepreneurial response to the emergence of new forms of social stratification such as a variety of new estate centres. These 'pioneer' sites seem to be a particular phenomenon of coastal regions like West Norfolk where there was an opportunity to exploit hitherto unused resources or landscape zones. A similar phenomenon has been noted in the Meuse-Demer-Scheldt region (southern Netherlands and northern Belgium) where, from a number of dispersed farmsteads dating to c.550-650 AD, new centres emerged in the middle of the Seventh centuries, which were then occupied until the Twelfth or Thirteenth centuries. Excavated centres at Dommelen (Theuws, 1988) and Geldrop (Theuws, 1993) both contained a main building, outbuildings and possible religious foci (Theuws, 1999, 337-350).

In contrast to the 'pioneer' sites, the case of Sedgeford reflects a further set of social circumstances governing settlement evolution. Here, there is clear evidence for an Early Anglo-Saxon presence, apparently restricted to burial activity spatially removed from the ensuing Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon activity foci. This may indicate the emergence of a new, but already land owning, administrative Middle Anglo-Saxon elite in the area. This pattern is similar to Breamore, Hampshire, where the main Early Anglo-Saxon activity focus, adjacent to a former Roman settlement, is dispersed into an estate focus and a number of hamlets between the Seventh and Tenth century (Loveluck, Strutt and Clogg, forthcoming).

To summarise, across Europe, there is increasing awareness of the diversity which may be hidden behind the phenomena of 'dispersed' and 'nucleated' settlements.

The West Norfolk survey has certainly confirmed this by demonstrating that a range of rural sites performed different roles within the 'productive site' label. Most importantly, observed phenomena are intrinsically linked to the emergence of a variety of different social groups (including elites), both landed and those with freedom of movement (Loveluck 2010/11, 26), with different ideologies and the power to form settlements or affect their development in different ways. Simply observing settlement phenomena is therefore not enough; we now need to ask *why* settlement patterns or settlement morphologies alter over time, and Chapter 12 offered a number of possible interpretations in relation to West Norfolk. Wormegay, for example, may have been set up after the Conversion as an isolated monastic site involved in trade. In contrast, West Walton might have been formed to act as a trade focus in a context of either secular elite control of a marginal landscape, or of niche exploitation by free but un-landed merchants. It is also useful to remember the possibility of transient elite identities, where merchants may become aristocrats (Whitelock, 1979, 468). In short, there may be no material reflection of any 'typical' lifestyle shared by different elite groups. Material culture is considered in more detail below.

**Functional zones and elite transformations**

Some of the key findings from the West Norfolk sites concerned the identification of more detailed transformations in settlement morphologies over time. Specifically, changing functional zones (proposed as representing social and economic transformations) have been identified by combining the detailed plotting of a range of portable surface finds by phase with the plans of boundary features observed during geophysics.

These observations are particularly crucial because such transformations are often suspected at apparently 'stable' sites without overall shifts in location, but are frequently invisible during surface survey. For example, Belgian surveyed sites near Leffinge West Flanders (Tys, 2003), are apparently characterised by stability over

time. However, a nearby excavated site, at Sint-Andries, Brugge, revealed an enclosed settlement of the Sixth to Ninth centuries that was *overlaid* by another featuring more intense enclosures and droveways of the Tenth to Twelfth centuries (Hollevoet and Hillewaert, 2002, 191).

Congham is the best West Norfolk example of a stable site with a variety of transforming functional zones. Here, detailed spatial analysis demonstrated that the northern activity focus contained both an Early Anglo-Saxon cemetery-related metalwork scatter *and* a contemporary artefact scatter with a contrasting distribution, consisting of pottery and two Merovingian gold *tremisses* which may or may not be cemetery related. This indicated a settlement involved in exchange activities, perhaps an estate centre, by the Seventh century.

By the Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon period, this arrangement was replaced by an enclosed area of settlement, incorporating a later church, further to the west and south, represented by a strong ceramic concentration located adjacent to multiple-phase boundaries. Further north, a further activity zone was interpreted as a separate market/fair zone located north of the habitation area and clustering around geophysical anomalies indicative of droveway ditches. A similar scenario might be the case at West Rudham, where a concentrated area of Middle Anglo-Saxon metal loss might relate to a routeway, as opposed to a settlement enclosure. The market/fair zone at Congham was characterised by abundant Middle Anglo-Saxon pottery and metalwork finds, particularly coinage. This suggested that pottery loss related to the circuit of activities that produced the metalwork/coin scatter, perhaps ceramic loss during exchange as payment of rent or tax or trade. Late Anglo-Saxon pottery and metalwork finds were less concentrated and were more often related to production, for example, metalworking waste. This raised the possibility that this part of the site had, by that period, been transformed into a multi-functional zone of economic transaction or specialist production.

The observations made at Congham are of high importance because they identify an early ‘estate centre’, developing into a site with separate ‘settlement’ and ‘market’

components from surface survey evidence alone *without* there being an overall shift in settlement location as at West Heslerton (Powlesland 1997, 101–17). These shifting functional zones may be explained by wider role-changes of the settlement(s) at Congham over time, perhaps instigated by local elites. Congham may have seen a change from Middle Anglo-Saxon secular centre to Late Anglo-Saxon site with increasing ecclesiastical and Anglo-Scandinavian presence. A short-lived phase of specialist ceramic production perhaps indicates strict elite control that quickly declined when a free haven for entrepreneurial production at Grimston emerged.

Some of these findings have wider implications for reappraising existing models of rural settlement but, at present, comparing sites like Congham to other contemporary centres is problematic because hitherto social transformations have not normally been narrated from survey data alone. However, if we accept a comparison between Congham with *excavated* sites, and comparability of datasets is clearly an issue, it is certainly not the only 'estate centre' in Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon England or continental Europe that might have experienced transformation in site character over time. The above cited settlement at Flixborough, which transformed from secular centre to ecclesiastical centre and back to secular centre between the Seventh and Tenth centuries (Loveluck, 2007b, 148-157), springs immediately to mind, although other sites have been cited such as Goltho, (Beresford, 1987). On the continent, further aristocratic estate centres that changed in character over time have also been excavated (Loveluck, 2005), for example, at Sithiu, Saint-Omer, Nord (Seventh to Ninth century secular to ecclesiastical transformation (Barbe et al, 1998, 9-40), Staffelsee, Bavaria Eighth century secular to ecclesiastical transformation) (Gebhard, 2000, 61-63) and Distre, Maine-et-Loire: Eleventh century secular to ecclesiastical transformation (Foucray and Gentili, 1998, 198-200; Pelaprat, 1992, 56).

In addition, although surface survey produces far less precise data than targeted excavation, it does have the advantage of being able to cover larger areas than most excavated sites. For example, the 75m by 55m excavated area at Flixborough,

although containing an exceptionally informative stratigraphic sequence, did not allow observation of changing trends in the use of space at the overall settlement (Loveluck, 2007b, 66). In capturing separate activity foci, such as settlement and adjacent market or waterfront and enclosed settlement, the West Norfolk surveys have added considerably to the analysis of how sites might transform over time.

**Waterfronts, enclosed sites and social transformations: Burnham and Bawsey**

The survey at Congham was not the only West Norfolk case-study to obtain interesting results concerning transforming functional zones at apparently stable sites. An important observation at both Burnham and Bawsey was the identification of unenclosed waterfront zones of trade and exchange, showing intriguing spatial and chronological relationships with adjacent areas of enclosed settlement and associated with transforming material culture profiles.

At Bawsey, a waterfront zone at the northwest end of the site is the main area of Middle Anglo-Saxon finds loss and is spatially discrete from a presumed area of settlement defined by a large enclosure ditch to the south. It is impossible to ascertain whether this waterfront zone reserved for trade and exchange pre-dates the enclosed settlement which may have contained both an ecclesiastical and secular elite presence. The Middle Anglo-Saxon coin evidence, however, consisting of both Anglian and Frisian coins might tentatively indicate the presence of both controlled and unregulated exchange and thus the activities of contrasting social groups, at the same site. As time progresses however the assemblage indicates increased Anglo-Saxon (Mercian) royal influence and a shunning of Scandinavian influence at a time when this may have resulted in instability. Interestingly, the later urban focus at Kings Lynn, which also seems to emerge from a context of intricate relationships between contrasting social groups (including ecclesiastical and secular)

(Parker, 1971, 21-22), first appears documentarily at the time of Bawsey's decline in the Eleventh century (Hutcheson, 2006, 103).

At Burnham, the integrated survey and auger data (Godwin, 2003), revealed compelling evidence for a significant waterfront zone of trade and exchange north of the Goose Beck from the Middle Anglo-Saxon period onwards. As with the site at Bawsey, it is impossible to ascertain whether the waterfront trade and exchange zone, which is certainly surrounded by geophysical anomalies perhaps reflecting a secular manorial settlement, originated within the context of elite control from the outset or whether it reflects an unregulated site of exchange that quickly acquired a controlling focus. In contrast to Bawsey, however, a shift in functional zones during the Tenth century at Burnham, towards the south side of the Goose Beck, is accompanied by a distinct shift in material culture use, indicating a significant Scandinavian/ Anglo-Scandinavian influence.

Although both Burnham and Bawsey share a number of site characteristics, including their beginnings as ephemeral, unregulated, sites of exchange, their important waterfront zones developed in different ways. The complexity seen within these two case studies can be used to reappraise Hodges' earlier developmental model of Type 'A' (seasonal trading site) to Type 'B' (planned permanent site) emporia (Hodges, 1982, 50-52). In particular, the evidence of Burnham and Bawsey indicates that, rather than revealing a linear developmental sequence from earlier seasonal trading site to planned or controlled settlement foci, these two features of settlement morphology can appear at roughly the same time. Excavation is now required to substantiate these claims.

The range of evidence at Bawsey and Burnham shows that the 'guiding hand' of Middle Anglo-Saxon royal elites is not necessarily the sole determiner in the formation and development of important sites of trade and exchange. Indeed, in the light of the complexity observed during the West Norfolk survey, re-interpretation of certain *emporium* sites in North Sea Europe would be useful in case similar complexity is reflected at other sites. For example, at Ribe, Jutland, Denmark, the

traditional interpretation has been that the 'emporium', characterised by evidence of trade, specialised production and planned building plots, started early in the Eighth century when a thick layer of sand was deliberately laid down across the site by royal command (Jensen, 1991, 9-10). However, the sand layer has more recently been reinterpreted as a naturally formed, wind-blown deposit (Feveile, 2006, 23). Furthermore, the settlement may not even have been permanent until the second half of the Eight century (Feveile, 2008, 54) and it was certainly not enclosed (defended?) with a ditch until the start of the Ninth century. This sequence is not necessarily out of keeping with a site like Bawsey.

If we accept the complexity of elite influence on the origins of sites like Bawsey, it is possible that this applies to the origins of a site such as Ribe despite the subsequent very different development of the two sites. Other trade orientated sites around Europe might feature similarly complex origins, for example, Aarhus, again in Jutland, Denmark, started out as an unfortified (and perhaps unregulated) site of exchange in the late Eighth century, and does not acquire a stockade, moat and regularly planned street grid until the Tenth century (Damm (ed.), 2005, 16-17).

Most importantly however, the above observations on site origins and development serve to break down the previous (perceived to be) intrinsic difference between rural sites, such as 'productive' sites, and the early emporia. Continuing with southern Scandinavian evidence, for example, where metal detecting occurs regularly as it does in the UK, there is now growing evidence for a range of places that might be interpreted as 'rural centres' (Hamerow, 2002) (see Ringtved, 1999, 49-70 or Jørgenson, 2003, 177, Fig. 15.1). These sites may also contain important zones of trade and exchange, evidence for specialist production and building plots, for example, the Ninth century site at Randlev, East Jutland (Damm (ed.), 2005, 62-71), or more particularly the site at Lake Tisso (Jorgenson, 2003). On this evidence, it seems that it is only by their later development that we can now distinguish the emporia from many other rural centres.

To return to settlement morphology; in the light of the West Norfolk observations, we might now consider those sites of trade/exchange that *can* be identified as temporary sites with ephemeral or no settlement evidence as exceptions, with sites that were also permanent settlements the norm. The 'beach trading' sites at Meols, Wirral (Griffiths 2001, 22-25, 2003); Bantham Ham, Devon (Fox 1955, 55-56; May and Weddell 2002, 420); Sandtun-West Hythe, Kent (Gardiner *et al*. 2001); and North Ferriby, East Yorkshire (Loveluck 1996, 44), all have associated material culture dating to the Seventh to Ninth centuries but very little settlement evidence, although this might partly be because of a lack of systematic investigation. However, if the 'beach trading' sites noted above are somehow *different* from other 'productive' sites, the presumed distinction should not, as Bawsey and Burnham have shown, be that beach trading is equated with unregulated exchange and social life at permanent settlements perceived as controlled by various elites. This point is particularly pertinent to a consideration of the development of the fen-edge sites of West Norfolk and the character of this region as a whole.

**Complex use of space and dynamic transformations over short periods: Wormegay**

A consideration of waterfront zones and enclosed settlements has raised a number of issues around elite control at these sites between the Seventh and Eleventh centuries and around the reflection of social transformations in both settlement morphology and material culture. It might also be argued that transformations are much more likely to be observable during the survey of sites with long occupation sequences, like Burnham. Yet, the West Norfolk survey also demonstrated that, even at sites with short sequences, it is possible to identify dynamic processes where transforming functional zones are indicative of wider social transformations.

At Wormegay a dense scatter of Ipswich ware with very little later Thetford-type wares and metal detector finds (including 7 coins dated 700 to 840, and 2 styli) suggested a short-lived Middle Anglo-Saxon site. The isolated topography had also led to the suggestion that this was a short-lived monastic site of the Seventh and

Ninth centuries (Rogerson, 2003, 120, Pestell, 2004, 54). However, geophysical survey subsequently revealed a dynamic occupation sequence. The site seems to have originated as a planned rectilinear unit with frequently replaced boundaries defining multiple functional zones perhaps relating to habitation, production (kiln-like anomalies), exchange (Ipswich ware and metalwork) and burial (human remains). However, the most important features recovered by geophysical survey were a series of sub-circular enclosures apparently truncating the earlier planned rectilinear settlement. In the absence of excavation, these probable boundaries provide a tentative context for the Ninth century finds at the site, including two oval brooches perhaps indicative of a ploughed-out Scandinavian-style burial. The final phase of activity at Wormegay has a number of morphological similarities to Goltho, Lincolnshire (Beresford, 1987). Goltho, was interpreted as an enclosed manorial site of the Ninth to Tenth centuries with a church outside it, but also featured a number of dynamic transformations from its origins as a modest farmstead. On present evidence, Wormegay may have been a middle Anglo-Saxon monastic site that transformed into a short-lived and ultimately unsuccessful Scandinavian-controlled manorial focus during the mid Ninth century.

The results of the Wormegay case-study have interesting implications. In particular, they add to our expectation that detailed investigation at other apparently 'short lived' sites, known only from fieldwalking finds, might recover similar dynamic transformations in settlement character. For example, when apparently unspectacular sites identified during the Fenland survey were trial excavated (e.g. Terrington St. Clements and Walpole St. Andrew; Crowson, 2005) intensively reworked enclosures and boundaries, potentially indicative of transforming social relationships, were recovered. It is presently unclear if these boundaries represent a pragmatic response to water-logging of sites, however, the evidence from Wormegay suggests that they might reflect the imposition of new social relationships. Beyond Norfolk, a number of apparently 'stable' sites of Middle Anglo-Saxon origin were identified during the East Anglia Kingdom survey in South East Suffolk. These sites, for example Clopton, Culpho and Grundisburgh, seemed to represent a re-colonisation of the clayland, with ceramic evidence indicating

exclusively Middle Anglo-Saxon occupation. This supposes settlement shifts between earlier Early Anglo-Saxon foci and later Late Anglo-Saxon sites (Newman, 1992, 34). In the light of surveys such as at Wormegay, it might be argued that these short-lived sites, which are also all close to parish churches, should be investigated in more detail in the hope of recovering transformations in site character over time.

Wormegay also shows us that a small amount of Ninth century Scandinavian influenced metalwork and coinage might actually reflect important social transformations and cannot always be interpreted as reflecting a 'baseline' reduction in consumption associated with the existence of increasingly regionalised trade and exchange networks, as has been proposed (Chapter 3). This pattern might be repeated at other sites in Anglo-Saxon England. The evidence of Tenth century Flixborough, for example, suggests that this 'reduced material culture use' might also coincide with huge contemporary transformations in settlement layout (Loveluck, 2007, 118-119).

Finally, outside Anglo-Saxon England, a number of apparently shorter lived continental sites, which are identified from survey alone in countries where metal detecting is illegal might, with further investigation, also be shown to represent shorter-lived sites with stable locations but important social transformations. For example, at the Oude Werf, Leffinge, West Flanders, a site of apparent stable location and with a ceramic sequence indicating occupation between the 6th and 12th centuries was, upon investigation, found to overlie a number of ephemeral geophysical anomalies (Loveluck, Tys, Davies and Deckers, in prep). Further investigation might well demonstrate the potential for dynamic re-configuration of internal boundaries at this site. This might also apply to the aforementioned sites recently surveyed on the Flemish coastal plain around Leffinge (Tys, 2003, Loveluck and Tys, 2002, 2006).

**Polyfocal Sites and social transformations: Rudham and West Walton**

Moving outwards from observations concerning the transformation of functional zones within settlements, the West Norfolk case-studies at Rudham and West Walton provided fascinating insights into the potential for different function*s* to be dispersed amongst *polyfocal sites* in a rural landscape. These dispersed functions can be used to argue for the existence of both strictly controlled and freer systems of social and economic life, perhaps even with transformations and/or co-existence of different lifestyles and economic modes over time.

Rudham is a polyfocal site, containing two clear Middle–Late Anglo-Saxon finds loss foci, one in the parish of West Rudham and another in the parish of East Rudham. The area of finds loss at West Rudham may even form two further discrete activity foci (WR 1 & 2), certainly in the Middle Anglo-Saxon period. This early complexity may also be reflected at Domesday, where East and West Rudham are treated as one settlement with a number of outliers. These settlement foci are apparently stable for a long time, perhaps even permanent. Indeed, they even appear to have some sort of relationship with earlier abundant Early Anglo-Saxon finds loss relating to ploughed-out cemeteries perhaps set-out along Roman roads in the area (Rogerson 2003, 116).

Chapter 7 asked why different settlements with inhabitants using coinage and presumably exploiting the same resources, might be located almost adjacent to one another, and the contrasting metalwork profiles of the individual settlement foci were extremely helpful here. Whereas in the early Anglo-Saxon period the profiles of metalwork loss are similar at all the Rudham foci, with most material representing buried cemeteries (Chester-Kadwell 2009, 62-90), the Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon period metal-loss patterns suggest contrasting activity foci. For example, Middle Anglo-Saxon coin loss was restricted to southern West Rudham (WR 1), perhaps suggesting market functions were located here (as opposed to at WR 2), whilst East Rudham has a good proportion of coin loss and little functional metalwork, perhaps suggesting a more specialised site.

By the late Anglo-Saxon period the two putative West Rudham foci had similar profiles of metalwork loss characterised by a full range of coinage, personal and functional metalwork. This suggests that as West Rudham 2 rose in prominence, the market/settlement at West Rudham 1 experienced decline, and they eventually merged into a Late Anglo-Saxon multi-functional, and perhaps competing, structure, with a degree of market activity at both foci. In contrast, East Rudham may always have existed as a tightly controlled high-status settlement focus, and might not have had the requirement or capacity to acquire and maintain a similar landscape presence as the West Rudham settlements, as the heavy Anglo-Norman ecclesiastical presence here might indicate (see Chapter 7). Interestingly, the presence of decorative Scandinavian metalwork (Ninth to Eleventh centuries) at both East and West Rudham, might hint at the character of new late Anglo-Saxon/Anglo-Scandinavian elite identities, themselves perhaps responsible for transformations observed.

Whereas it is possible to view the Rudhams, the most inland of the West Norfolk sites, within a context of control via secular and ecclesiastical elites, this may not be the case for the additional case-study site at West Walton. West Walton is particularly interesting because its coin and metalwork finds stand out from other sites in the Fenland, which apparently contain inhabitants with lifestyles rooted in specialist production (Rogerson, 2005, 32, Crowson, 2005, 205). For example, excavations at Fishtoft, Lincolnshire, a site straddling a creek and interpreted as a settlement operating within a wider ecclesiastical estate, recovered stratified evidence for Middle Anglo-Saxon salt production (briquetage) and lead production (an ingot) but virtually no non-ferrous metalwork and coinage (Cope-Faulkner, forthcoming, 175-6).

As previously discussed the fen-edge sites are intriguing because of the phenomenon of pioneer sites and the question of how and why they emerged. An intriguing aspect of West Walton is that, because of its polyfocal nature, strung out along the edge of a roddon in a relatively inaccessible landscape, it may have originated in a context of unregulated exchange, with the ‘market’ focus (represented by coin and metalwork

loss) only later acquiring control in the form of multiple manors. It is also possible that certain activity foci, such as the outlying focus at Ingleborough, possibly involved in salt production (Crowson, 2005, 171-190), always existed on the periphery of centralised elite control, as corroborated by the large number of freemen at Domesday. It is even possible (as at Bawsey), that at West Walton we can actually see the interaction of free (merchants/specialist producers) and controlled (manors/specialist producers) lifestyles at the same 'site'.

Clearly, further investigation would be required to establish any material signature of non-land holding minor elites (merchants) who might be interacting with specialist producers at West Walton, but this could be an important element of future site interpretation (Loveluck, 2010/2011, 26-29). The above observation will not be unfamiliar to scholars of Carolingian Europe, where the role of merchants or *marchand-paysans* (Lebecq, 1983) and their relation to other landed elites is increasingly a subject of debate. For example, at Comacchio in Italy, seafaring and artisan communities are now seen to have operated independently of an external landed ecclesiastical/secular elite presence during the Sixth and Seventh centuries, although this had arrived by the Eighth century (Gelichi, 2007, 365-386).

**Status and Ethnicity at individual sites**

The above observations bring us to touch upon some of the critical issues raised in Chapter 2. In particular, where past research developed a more rigid settlement hierarchy and social labels, we now have to allow for the possibility of contrasting social identities with individuals of vastly different perceived status or ethnicity interacting at the same settlement (producers and merchants, or merchants and landed elites). A more satisfactory way of exploring this possibility, instead of labelling social groups, is to explore the complex expressions of status and ethnicity now visible in the archaeological record.

Throughout this thesis we have been confronted with various different expressions of status and ethnicity, mainly as expressed through portable metalwork and coinage. Each artefact type has its own distinctive 'narrative potential' that is both chronologically and contextually specific (Chapter 2). For example, fluctuations in coin use are clearly linked to wider changes in rural economies, which transform from international to regional networks by the Ninth century, and patterns of coin loss can therefore be used to look at transforming identities in relation to status. For example, coin use reduces dramatically between c.760 and 870, and a small amount of coinage at Bawsey at this time might indicate *elevated* status compared to more abundant coin use between c.680 and 740, when coinage is in plentiful circulation.

Unfortunately, it is much more difficult to use other material classes from surface assemblages at present, to identify relative patterns indicative of status (or status changes) in a quantitative way. Even so, in the light of the above, it must be imagined that access to other frequently imported object types (e.g. non-ferrous metalwork) would also have undergone similar contemporary transformations more clearly observable with coinage. This would presumably also have affected patterns of production at those sites where non-ferrous personal metalwork might have been manufactured. Both dress pins and styli might be suitable for analysis in these terms. For example, changes in the profile of the pin assemblages at Wormegay and Sedgeford might signify the changing status of pins over time, possibly linked to ease of access to this artefact type (Davies and Payne, forthcoming). Furthermore, if as seems likely, styli are intrinsically linked to symbolic status (Pestell, 2004, 47) their use and relative status may have differed at different sites (e.g. the probable monastic site at Wormegay and the multifunctional site at Bawsey) over time. The relative quantities of metal artefact types at sites (i.e. the preponderance of iron as opposed to non-ferrous metal during the Tenth century) might also offer some initial interpretative insight into site status.

Whereas observations concerning status and portable material culture at individual sites need be qualified against regional distribution patterns, interpretations of site character via observations of ethnic identity, as read from artwork on metalwork

finds, can perhaps operate on a more qualitative level. For example, during the Tenth century individuals at Burnham were using (and losing) a number of distinctive Scandinavian and Anglo-Scandinavian influenced objects, specifically in the southern part of the site. In contrast, the northern portion of the site was dominated by 'Anglo-Saxon' metalwork. While acknowledging that, during the Viking period, ethnic identity was a very transient and malleable thing (see for example Hakenback, 2007), one can argue that there are clearly zones of occupation at Burnham where contrasting patterns of artefact-loss reflect different expressions of ethnic identity.

It is of course not so clear what these contrasting artistic expressions on portable material culture might really *mean* in terms of the identity of real people. At Bawsey and Rudham it is interesting to note that Anglo-Scandinavian decoration appears on artefacts traditionally related to both elite status and hunting (horse furniture) (Loveluck, 2009, 29) *and* to lower status dress related metalwork (Margeson, 1996, 48). Accordingly, it is not necessarily straightforward to link Scandinavian influenced artefacts to a specific status or identity, especially as assimilation of Scandinavian influences into Anglo-Saxon lifestyles may have been very rapid (Leahy and Patterson, 2001, 189). At a macro-scale this seems to be corroborated by the fact that artefacts such as horse equipment are not restricted to a single landscape zone (producer fen-edge, or inland 'estate centre'). Furthermore, there is an increasing feeling that 'free merchant classes' may have also been horse-borne, which further complicates the picture (Loveluck, 2009, 12-13).

In summary, although it is clear that individual case-study sites do feature material culture indicative of *contrasting* aspects of status or ethnicity, it is not yet easy (or perhaps even desirable) to attribute these to specific social groups during surface survey. However, excavated finds such as the Tattershall Thorpe (Lincolnshire), grave of a Seventh century non-ferrous metalworker, which was accompanied by a range of tools such as an anvil, a set of weights and a balance, demonstrate that even 'everyday' object types associated with trades could be used to express intrinsic aspects of an individual's identity in death (Hinton, 2000, 112-115). This offers us

hope that future work might tie 'everyday' objects linked to trade to the lifestyles of specific social groups (e.g. merchants) at individual rural settlements.

**Morphological and material culture profile transformations combined: excavation at Sedgeford.**

The above discussion forces the conclusion that the study of portable material culture at settlements leaves a number of problems when it comes to issues of status and ethnicity at surveyed sites. At Sedgeford, however, the additional opportunity to explore these issues through the precision of excavated data has provided a detailed insight into transforming functional zones, material culture use and what these lifestyle changes might mean in terms of elite transformations. In particular, the changing profile of the faunal remains, in association with other portable material culture at the site can be used to explore unintentionally revealed facets of social identities, such as changing status.

At Sedgeford, excavated deposits containing a large amount of animal bone have been firmly dated to the Middle Anglo-Saxon, Mid-Late Ninth century and Late Anglo-Saxon periods. This allowed investigation of changes in patterns of animal exploitation over time (Poole, forthcoming). Chapter 9 tentatively suggested that this site can be seen to transform from a wool producing site, administered by an ecclesiastical Middle Anglo-Saxon elite, into a Late Anglo-Saxon secular consumer site with a small elite presence. Interestingly, portable material culture (styli, coins, decorated vessel glass) is more abundant during the Middle Anglo-Saxon occupation phases, and it can be argued that the putative ecclesiastical status is revealed as much by portable material culture as by the faunal profile, although this material culture of display is certainly not exclusive to ecclesiastical elites at this time (see for example the excavated secular palaces at Aachen, Ingelheim or Paderborn in Germany (Gai, 1999, Wyss, 1999, Loveluck, forthcoming). In contrast, during the Late Anglo-Saxon period, the faunal profile, including an increase in butchered meat, cattle and the exploitation of wild species, which indicates both meat consumption

and perhaps the practice of hunting, elucidates site status and social identity at Sedgeford rather more than the fairly basic assemblage of portable material culture.

The expression of Late Anglo-Saxon secular elite was through feasting and hunting, as opposed to through portable material culture, and this reflects changing exchange networks in the Tenth century, as has also been noted at other excavated sites such as Flixborough (Loveluck, 2007b, 155-156). This situation, with sites as centres of consumption, is paralleled on contemporary continental sites including Distre Les Murailles, Maine-et-Loire, and Serris, Seine-et-Marne, France (Gentili and Valais, 2007). Interestingly, at Flixborough secular elite identity in the Tenth century was reflected more in impressive timber architecture than in portable material culture (ibid.). In this connection, it is also interesting to note the construction of a series of large boundary ditches and drove-ways during the tenth century at Sedgeford, perhaps legitimising an elite presence.

**The Significance of settlement diversity in West Norfolk.**

Detailed analysis has now highlighted the existence of a wide variety of rural centres with contrasting functional zones in West Norfolk. This is indicative of a broader spectrum of social groups than is usually evident in textual sources (Loveluck, 2010/11, 1) or is perhaps implied by the label 'productive site'. Indeed there is now the possibility that different social groups might even be identified *within* a single rural centre, as envisaged by Moreland (2000a). This seems to be especially true in the coastal zone, which contains settlements with evidence for both production and consumption possibly reflecting co-existent lifestyles and modes of economy. These diverse social groups can also be seen to have shaped the rural economy and society to an extent that challenges older models of social change, which over-emphasised the role of emporia, and royal control of exchange (Hodges, 1982, 2000). Transforming material culture profiles at individual sites mean that we must also now allow for social identities that change over time.

Perhaps most importantly, a consideration of the West Norfolk results against wider parallels from both Anglo-Saxon England and northern North Sea Europe has demonstrated that the diversity observed during this study may be repeated in other regions. However, at present the best parallels for the surveyed sites often come from excavated settlements, and there are clearly comparability issues which need to be resolved by future work. In addition, the evidence from individual settlements leaves us with questions concerning the character of societies at a landscape scale. The second part of this chapter, armed with the knowledge of diversity, complexity and changing lifestyles from individual case-study sites, therefore revisits the wider themes of central places, exchange and regional identity raised in Chapter 3. This final discussion seeks to offer a more nuanced interpretation of how the various elements of society and economy might have worked in early medieval West Norfolk. In re-assessing our understanding of this regions' social organisation and changing social identities, we can also highlight and explore common and contrasting themes in other rural regions of North Sea Europe.

## Re-characterising West Norfolk

West Norfolk was a sample selected arbitrarily for this study, although it is true that at certain times it may have featured a degree of political or administrative coherence (for example as the Early Anglo-Saxon kingdom of the Wissa (Rogerson et al., 1997, 17)). Nevertheless, this sub-region contains enough geographical and topographical contrast to observe a diverse and complex range of multifunctional early medieval rural settlements in all landscape zones, as well as the differential movement of certain material culture groups within the rural landscape. Settlement morphologies are still under-explored, but many sites certainly do transform over time.

As well as this, it is now clear that at many sites economic lives, as reflected in the material remains of lifestyles, were a crucial factor in the creation and reproduction of social affiliations and identities. An important method for the identification of this has been the detailed study of material culture use at individual sites (Chapters 5-11)

against the 'normal' circulation of material culture in the wider region (Chapter 3). The significance of these patterns can now be considered further.

Coastal landscapes were often portrayed as liminal wastes during the early medieval period, for example, the author of Beowulf describes a desolate waste between land and sea (Heaney, 1999, 8-11), while the Eighth century Life of Guthlac presents the Fens as the edge of the inhabited world, describing '...a most dismal fen of immense size... ' and '...the wild places of this vast desert...' (Colgrave, 1956,87). Recently, however, it has been suggested that these 'desolate wastes' might actually reflect an elite perception of coastal landscapes, recorded as such by elite sponsored scribes, due to the fact that coasts were actually thriving, but unregulated and un-policed, landscapes (Loveluck, 2010/11, 5-6). In actual fact there was probably an intimate link between certain groups of Anglo-Saxon people and the coast, sea and waterborne travel (Rose, 2007, 1).

Sites like West Walton, featuring extensive evidence for trade and exchange lifestyles within the 'marginal' Fenland, certainly support the above notion. They also open up a wider debate concerning the nature of social control in the rural landscape, and the identity of those social groups that might have been involved in the various activities. Whereas 'first choice' fen-edge settlement locations, immediately inland from the wetland, might be characterised as more tightly controlled stable elite foci from the Early Anglo-Saxon period onwards, the sprawling polyfocal 'pioneer' sites that colonise the Fenland itself for the first time during the Seventh or Eighth century might represent, in part, the activities and settlements of landless merchant classes and freemen. In Carolingian Europe it has been suggested that certain rural elites may have taken more interest in subjecting merchants to tolls during the movement of commodities, using nodal points in the landscape instead of attempting to control the whole landscape via settlements (Verhulst, 2002, 88). Future work is needed to identify the role and material signature of non land-holding social groups such as merchants, but this scenario seems highly likely in large parts of Middle-Late Anglo–Saxon coastal West Norfolk. Although this interpretation portrays the region as a thriving landscape, it also shows that it was

exactly the sort of landscape that traditional elites, both secular and ecclesiastical, might have found difficult to administer.

It is also important to remember that, over time, elite perception of coastal settlements as either liminal or linked-in places might have been altered according to particular social, political and economic transformations (Loveluck, 2010/11, 6). For example, the emergence of a port-town such as Lynn in the later Eleventh century might have fundamentally altered elite perceptions of the rest of coastal West Norfolk. Unfortunately previous models of settlement and economy have not always allowed for change in either the perceptions or the economic realities of coastal landscapes over time. For example, Sindbaeks' (2007) approach to coastal landing places and inland central places does not consider that drastic changes might occur in import consumption and/or commodity production over time.

Whatever the perception of contemporary elites, it is increasingly clear that in terms of material culture consumption, Anglo-Saxon coastal West Norfolk *was* a relatively prosperous region. This wealth was spread around the landscape and was not contingent on the area having a proto-urban/urban focus. By way of crude analysis, West Norfolk comprises 27% of the land mass of Norfolk as a whole, and contains 28% and 23% of the Norfolk total of Anglo-Saxon pin and brooch findspots respectively. This indicates that 'background' artefact loss is about at the regional mean, and certainly not less. Intriguingly, however, individual pottery findspots make up 36% of the Norfolk total, and Strap Ends a massive 88% (Rogerson, pers comm, 2002). Although these figures are crude, they do seem to imply that even though West Norfolk findspots (which usually equate to sites) are of a similar density to the rest of Norfolk, material culture profiles are a little more varied, indicating the abundance of multifunctional rural sites performing the functions of an absent single central place. Salt-production might also account for the large quantities of Ipswich Ware found at many coastal sites (Blinkhorn, pers comm.).

The diverse range of settlements acting as 'rural centres' (Hamerow, 2002, 125), from at least the Seventh century, is clearly a distinctive characteristic of West

Norfolk. However, we might broadly characterise the rural settlement hierarchy as featuring unregulated exchange within the coastal zone, and ecclesiastical/secular controlled exchange and consumption further inland. The existence of differential access to and consumption of commodities, indicating contrasting lifestyles, seems to be supported at a landscape scale most clearly by the evidence of Middle Anglo-Saxon imported pottery. Most noticeably there appears to have been abundant access to imported North French Blackware in the immediate coastal zone, whereas Badorf Ware, which may indicate imported wine, is largely restricted to the inland estate centres. In this instance it might be suggested that there contrasting status was given to imported ceramics between coastal and inland zones. The unregulated coastal settlements, with more abundant access to imported pottery, may not have regarded it as relating to elevated status. In contrast, the Badorf Ware at the elite controlled inland centres may have been intrinsically linked to high status activities such as feasting, even though it might have passed initially through the coastal sites. In contrast, the loss pattern of iron artefacts, which is largely restricted to the inland estate centres (see Chapter 3), might indicate the lower status of iron at the inland centres, as opposed to the fen-edge centres where this commodity may have been valued and therefore recycled.

The above patterns suggest that attitudes to the consumption of different materials sometimes varied a great deal between different West Norfolk communities. Furthermore, although significant evidence for production has been harder to recover during site surveys, the changing importance of specialist production capability would also have been an important aspect of settlement identity (Moreland, 2000b, 99). There are hints that differential attitudes towards production may also have existed in West Norfolk. Strict control may have been exerted at inland sites, for example over pottery production at Late Anglo-Saxon Congham, but seems to be absent from coastal sites involved in salt production (West Walton) or metal working (Wormegay). Unfortunately, production related activities at survey sites are very difficult to date. Yet, the excavations at Sedgeford clearly indicate that there is excellent potential in West Norfolk to compare variations in patterns of production over time through excavation (particularly using faunal profiles).

Polyfocal West Walton, with its extensive evidence for trade and exchange lifestyles directly associated with production, also offers a caution. It is clear that specific activities in this case were *not* restricted to either controlled or unregulated activity foci, reflecting just how complex and constantly evolving the array of social identities was.

Coinage illustrates the above point about evolving social identities particularly well. Coin loss, and presumably therefore coin use, is certainly not restricted to any particular landscape zone in West Norfolk (see Chapter 3). However, within the wider pattern of coin loss, many of the West Norfolk sites explored seem to experience different peaks and troughs in economic activity, evidenced by variations in coin loss over time. It has been argued above that abundant coin loss c. 680-740 and infrequent coin loss c.760 and 870 reflect a wider economic transformation from international to regional trade networks (Naylor, 2007). However this change in coin-use might also have had ramifications for the construction of social identities. For example, coinage from West Norfolk could be used to suggest that we have the potential to identify a coastal society which was perceived as *both* linked-in and liminal at different points between the Seventh and Ninth centuries with, for example, perhaps more contact between coastal societies and inland elites between c.680 and 740 and less contact between c.760 and 870.

The above observation implies that contrasting patterns of status, reflected through changing material culture use, may also reflect changing social identities at a regional level. Certain material classes however, for example Middle Anglo-Saxon Ipswich Ware, are of less use for making regional observations concerning differential status and identity in West Norfolk because of their ubiquity at rural settlements. Clearly, Ipswich Ware at settlements *does* reflect an important set of circumstances possibly of controlled production, if not of distribution and consumption. In this case it might be argued that more valuable observations can be gained from detailed plotting of the locations of Ipswich Ware distribution at individual sites, as in Chapters 5-11, than from a regional analysis of the quantities of the material at sites. For example, Terrington St Clements has one of the largest

Ipswich Ware assemblages in Norfolk, but seems to be a site of temporary occupation rooted in production (Crowson, 2005).

To take forward the characterisation of settlements and social identities in West Norfolk, one final important area concerns the possible identification of changing material expressions of ethnicity over time. Unfortunately, the overtly Germanic influences on the cemetery record of Early Anglo-Saxon Norfolk do not necessarily inform us about the character of identities *in relation to settlements*. While there are far fewer distinctive imports of metalwork following the conversion to Christianity (although the evidence of Middle Anglo-Saxon pins might be signalling as yet unknown aspects of ethnic identity (Davies and Payne, forthcoming), the most tangible changes in the material expression of ethnicity occur in relation to Scandinavian and Anglo-Scandinavian influences on metalwork during the Ninth and Tenth centuries, which are renewed during the Eleventh century. Sites such as Burnham have demonstrated that it is possible that transformations in settlement use and social identities might, in some cases, have been linked to contemporary transformations in material expressions of ethnicity (if not necessarily in the actual ethnicity of people). The evidence of Wormegay shows that dynamic transformations in expressions of ethnicity might occur even at apparently short lived sites.

Because Scandinavian influenced material is widely distributed in the rural landscape of Norfolk, it has been used to argue for a very quick and widespread diffusion of Scandinavian influence (Leahy and Paterson, 2001, Margeson, 1996). However, a major complicating factor is the fact that material culture with Scandinavian or Anglo-Scandinavian associations seems to signal various different levels of social status (see above). As a result it may be easier to interpret the specific nature of 'Scandinavian' influence at the level of detailed case-studies, as opposed to within regional distributions of material culture. Nevertheless, the general evidence does seem to indicate that there was a strong material expression of an ethnic identity with Scandinavian influence within West Norfolk during the Tenth century. It is less certain whether this reflects a strong high-status and increasingly land-owning

Scandinavian elite, as might be suggested by Domesday Book. There is, for example, as much evidence for continuity, as opposed to change, in the use of settlement zones and boundaries at rural sites at this time. Finally, there may also be sites, such as Bawsey, where material culture is actively signalling affiliation to an 'Anglo-Saxon' and perhaps royal identity at this time.

## Characterising early medieval rural identities: How does the West Norfolk situation fit with other regions?

Having summarised some of the major aspects of the characterisation of early medieval lifestyles and social identities in West Norfolk that are potentially 'distinctive', it is important to see how this evidence sits against other regions in Eastern England and northern North Sea Europe. This discussion will particularly focus on Yorkshire and Lincolnshire, as there are a number of socio-economic commonalties, and some crucial contrasts, between these two regions and West Norfolk.

To recapitulate, models of early medieval settlement and society have sometimes suggested that the exploitation of lowland sites and coasts could only be conducted by more strictly controlled societies, '...able to create a habitable environment by collective effort...' (Braudel, 2002, 14). This links to widely accepted ideas about firm lordly control, particularly those associated with the conceptualisation of the bipartite estate of Carolingian Europe (Devroey, 2001, 117-120). Similar notions underpin a lot of the literature on the development of open fields and nucleated settlements in Anglo-Saxon England (Roberts, 2008, Williamson, 2003, 6-7). However, these older models perhaps paint a rather inward-looking picture of social life dominated by agricultural production, with surplus appropriated by secular and ecclesiastical elites in inland areas, and commercial networks and free merchants only emerging at a later date (Devroey, 2001, 121). This established picture is corroborated by an analysis of Domesday Book for areas such as North Yorkshire or Northumbria where most inland estates can be paired with suitable natural

anchorages and landing places along the coast, implying control of the coast by inland elites (Pearson, 1999, Deckers, forthcoming).

The collected evidence from coastal West Norfolk now indicates in contrast to this that this region contained numerous settlements of consumers, producers and traders, thriving under less strict regulation than the inland estate centres from the Seventh century onwards. It therefore becomes increasingly difficult to use the evidence of material culture to portray the fen-edge as a marginal landscape zone, or to work within a simple linear model of controlled exploitation in the rural landscape.

With the excavation of more inland Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon estate centres, coastal-inland contrasts are increasingly being recognised as a distinct phenomenon. For example, the inland centres at Yarnton, Oxfordshire (Hey, 2002) and Higham Ferrers, Northamptonshire, which featured large enclosure ditches (Hardy et al., 2007) are both notable for their limited evidence of consumption of imported goods. Similarly, in Norfolk, the extensively excavated high-status ecclesiastical centre at North Elmham is relatively sparse in imported material and coinage (Wade Martins, 1980b, 495-508). On this evidence, it can be suggested that inland centres may not have had controlled access to 'luxury commodities', meaning that there may be multiple social interpretations behind the observed emergence of inland estate centres, something the West Norfolk work certainly supports. For example, albeit in a different topographical situation, it has recently been noted that the creation of nucleated hilltop villages of the Seventh and Eighth century in Tuscany, Italy, need not be interpreted a symptom of strict internal social hierarchies (Francovich, 2008, 62-63).

Beyond West Norfolk, less systematic work has been undertaken with the aim of using both settlements and material culture to interpret the development of social identities over time. However, in Anglo-Saxon England there are now a number of regions where similar diversity to West Norfolk could be postulated. In Yorkshire, for example, collaboration between metal detectorists and archaeologists is producing an increasingly detailed picture of rural settlement and society (Leahy, 2000, 51-82;

Richards, 2003, 155–67; Naylor, 2007, 41-61). Leahy's synthesis of 'productive' sites in Yorkshire, concentrating on coinage and metalwork, has demonstrated that they too might feature quite different periods of economic prosperity or decline which hint at different site status and function between the Seventh and Tenth centuries. For example at South Newbald, and Cottam, which feature respectively an absence and presence of domestic objects (Leahy, 2000, 75). Interestingly, Leahy's work also seemed to indicate, in contrast to West Norfolk, some overall patterns for the Yorkshire 'productive' sites. The Yorkshire sites seem not to have been important Early Anglo-Saxon centres, as they produced no finds of Early Anglo-Saxon metalwork, despite the good visibility of Early Anglo-Saxon cemeteries in this area (particularly late cemeteries) (Lucy, 2000, 140). This pattern is in stark contrast with other regions, for example Lincolnshire, where Early Anglo-Saxon material seems to occur in abundance close to Middle Anglo-Saxon 'productive' sites (Leahy, 2003, 140-143). Later, a relatively large number of mid Ninth century coins in comparison to southern 'productive' sites and an apparent decline/cessation of activity in the Tenth century also seem to be characteristic of the Yorkshire sites (Leahy, 2000, 75-76).

These points of basic difference between Yorkshire and West Norfolk sites raise some interesting questions, including to what extent these differentiations are more apparent than real. Taking the coinage first, the kingdom of Northumbria is fortuitous, in that it is the only kingdom producing its own coinage (*styca*) throughout the Ninth century, perhaps reflecting greater royal control (Naylor, 2007, 59). This contrasts with West Norfolk, where coinage is much rarer but has a strong Continental element. In addition, sites like Bawsey might indicate that Mercian coinage, perhaps indicating royal control, was circulating in West Norfolk during the Ninth century instead of the styca, (see Chapter 10). These regional differences in coin circulation may indicate a greater control over trade and exchange lifestyles in parts of Yorkshire compared to West Norfolk. In this respect, the fact that many 'productive' sites in Yorkshire seem to represent Middle Anglo-Saxon pioneer sites might also be significant. Leahy has suggested that a lack of Early Anglo-Saxon finds at Yorkshire sites might indicate 'different processes' by which sites come into use,

compared to areas such as Lincolnshire (Leahy, 2000, 74). This raises the possibility that a number of sites later involved in trade and exchange in Yorkshire were, in contrast to West Norfolk, founded by elites as planned controlled activity foci as opposed to being longer lived foci with more organic histories of settlement development.

The apparent Tenth century decline of the 'productive' sites in Yorkshire is very interesting, especially as this is a pattern that seems to be reproduced (at least superficially) in Lincolnshire (Ulmschnieder, 2000a, 53-79. Given that metalwork loss appears to end abruptly at the Lincolnshire 'productive' sites by the Tenth century, Leahy and Patterson suggested that this coincided with the Viking settlement of 877 (Leahy and Paterson, 2001, 189). Leahy further suggested that that the termination of activity at the Lincolnshire productive sites might have been the result of the division of estates among the incoming Danish population (Leahy, 2003, 143). For Lincolnshire, Ulmschnieder (2000a, 53-79) initially suggested that important rural sites of trade and exchange were sited next to established routes of communication to which, for Yorkshire at least, Naylor later added the importance of coastal/riverine locations (Naylor, 2004). On this evidence the Lincolnshire/Yorkshire 'productive' sites – situated only in locations of strategic importance – might be easier targets for Scandinavian settlement than certain West Norfolk sites. An alternative suggestion (see above) is that the nature of Scandinavian settlement was intrinsically different between Norfolk and these two regions.

On a cautionary note, we should not conclude too quickly on the relative fortunes of rural settlements, and what this might represent in terms of social control, solely on consideration of metalwork and coinage. In particular the apparent cessation of activity at Yorkshire 'productive' sites in the Tenth century can be contested as a phenomenon more apparent than real. As noted in Chapter 2, geophysics and fieldwalking at Cottam (Richards, 2003, 160–1) clearly demonstrated that, although surface finds of metalwork and pottery change in character during the Tenth century (particularly showing a drop-off in coinage), settlement activity continued. This case-study suggests that we should not paint too contrasting a picture of short-lived

Yorkshire/Lincolnshire, and longer-lived West Norfolk 'productive' sites , at least until more systematic work is undertaken. Indeed in Lincolnshire longer occupation sequences continuing through the Tenth century have now been identified at Flixborough (Loveluck, 2007b, 155-156), which Ulmschneider has also labelled a 'productive' site (Ulmschneider, 2000a). This warns us against the hasty interpretation that '... [Tenth century]...finds are too few to suggest that ... ['productive' sites] ...survived in anything other than attenuated form (Leahy, 2003, 143)'.

It is crucial however, even if we accept that some Yorkshire sites continued through the Tenth century, that the transformations at Cottam and Flixborough, N. Lincs, suggest some quite interesting regional differentiations, in contrast to West Norfolk, in the changing character of rural elite identities. In particular, the northern focus at Cottam (Cottam B) slightly shifts in location during the 10th century, with an 'Anglian' enclosure being replaced by an 'Anglo-Scandinavian' one. This morphological shift is reflected by the distribution of surface finds of pottery and metalwork from the site: particularly disc headed pins interpreted as a distinctly Scandinavian influenced find type (Haldenby and Richards 2009, 309–14). Interestingly, disc headed pins are almost completely absent from Norfolk, despite the fact that there are prominent Tenth century and Scandinavian/Anglo-Scandinavian phases of activity at West Norfolk 'productive' sites, such as Burnham or Wormegay. Given that the disc-headed pins might have been used in Yorkshire to affiliate to, or associate with, aspects of Scandinavian or Anglo-Scandinavian identities (ibid.), the population of Ninth to Tenth century West Norfolk might have been signifying identity in different ways (such as in the use of horse furniture) and perhaps even avoided linking to perceived social connotations embodied by these particular pins. This speculation perhaps pushes the interpretation of the evidence too far, but there are certainly some hints at regional variations in the use of metalwork at sites and future work might explore more systematically what this says about regional trends in distinctive material expressions of social identities.

Beyond the dynamics of individual sites and the limited picture provided by a consideration of metalwork and coinage alone, further work in Yorkshire has also highlighted the variety of social dynamics and identities between coastal and inland zones, emphasising both common and contrasting aspects of settlement hierarchies. For example, Loveluck (forthcoming) recently noted, that there are highly differentiated patterns of consumption in relation to the regionally imported ceramic Ipswich Ware in the Yorkshire environs; it is abundant at a variety of different types of site within 10km of the Humber estuary but very sparse at the emporia at York. So, whereas the emporium at York and many of the Yorkshire 'productive' sites might traditionally be interpreted within a context of strict elite control, the presence of Ipswich Ware at numerous 'normal' sites may indicate that different modes of exchange indicative of free, unregulated lifestyles and social identities were in existence. Indeed, because of a newly discovered pre-cursor settlement focus at nearby Heslerton, a recent consideration of the origins of York itself concluded that the establishment of the settlement at Fishergate (by the late Seventh century), although characterised by specialised craft production and long-distance exchange, does not necessarily represent a *de novo* settlement established under royal control (Spall and Toop, 2008, 1-25). Instead the foundation of York, although later notable for featuring distinct ecclesiastical interests (Rollason, 2003, 117-140), should be viewed as a 'longer-lived and more integrated social and economic process' (Spall and Toop, 2008, 20), a notion that seems to have more common ground with the evidence of West Norfolk.

Bearing in mind the importance of specialist production in the characterisation of the origins of Middle Anglo-Saxon York, it might be possible to move beyond ceramics and consider that the presence of some aspects of specialist production (instead of more easily visible indicators such as coinage) might indicate flourishing rural communities engaged in trade and exchange lifestyles in other regions. In particular, an important specialised production, although one that is hard to recover because of a lack of dating evidence in West Norfolk (e.g. West Walton), is that of salt. Evidence is now emerging for specialist production sites in coastal regions, for example in Lincolnshire, with Middle Anglo-Saxon briquetage at Fishtoft (Cope-

Faulkner, forthcoming, 175-6) and other sites where salt production of a Middle Anglo-Saxon date has always been postulated, for example, Chopdike Drove, Gosberton (Lane and Morris, 2001, 17 and 473; Crowson, 2005, 71-96).

Having demonstrated that individual coastal regions might have been engaged in specialist salt production from the Middle Anglo-Saxon period onwards, but that dateable material evidence for this is frequently absent, how else might we assess status or other aspect of social identities particular to these communities? Firstly, the Domesday evidence for West Walton hinted that salt production might occur in a very interesting combination of both free and controlled production (see Chapter 11). Secondly, further corroboration of the unusual set of social circumstances in which specialist producers operated in coastal areas is provided by the evidence from Carolingian Europe, which has far better documentary sources than Anglo-Saxon England. Verhulst has demonstrated, using ecclesiastical records, that in areas such as the Zeeland Islands in the Scheldt estuary, salt making was sometimes undertaken on land that was nominally owned by abbeys, but that the inland ecclesiastical centres had no direct involvement in the exploitation of the *salines* (salterns), which was carried out by free entrepreneurs (Verhulst, 2002, 81). The trading of salt inland was also sometimes exempt from ecclesiastical tolls, with the entrepreneurs perhaps under closer supervision by the king, as indicated by a document recording the resolution of a dispute between Louis the Pious and apparently profit-making salt producers (ibid, Boretius, 1984).

It is interesting to hypothesise that the complex social and economic relationships that existed in Carolingian Europe in relation to salt production, between ecclesiastical elites, secular elites and free entrepreneurs, might also have existed in Anglo-Saxon England. In Lincolnshire, for example. This means that a marked absence of metalwork from coastal areas, in comparison to inland 'productive' sites (Ulmschneider, 2000a, 70), does not have to mean that the coastal sites were *not* engaged in wider economic activities. In addition to salt production, sites like Gosberton or Riby, were also engaged in iron smithing, cultivation of salt tolerant barley and a mixed animal economy, all of which could have been utilised in direct

exchange with mariners, as may be evidenced by imported quern stone and pottery, or with inland centres (Crowson, 2005,71-96; Steedman, 1994, 212; Loveluck and Tys, 2006).

The evidence from biological remains, particularly animal bones, is another area for comparison between regions such as Yorkshire and Lincolnshire and West Norfolk. The evidence of West Norfolk suggests a huge range of animal exploitation patterns at rural sites. Sedgeford, for example, might transform from producer to consumer during the Ninth century, a process which may mirror an ecclesiastical to secular elite transformation. In contrast, transformations are less evident at North Elmham. The Norfolk fen sites are dominated by mixed animal economies, but Walpole St Andrew, has an emphasis on meat production and may have been producing for other sites (Crowson, 2005, 174).

In Lincolnshire, Flixborough (Loveluck, 2007b, 96), like Sedgeford, is characterised by changes in animal exploitation. During the Ninth century in particular, a transformation from conspicuous consumption to conspicuous production, characterised by a decrease in cattle and pig consumption and an increase in sheep consumption, and a collapse in wild animal exploitation, reflects a transformation from secular to ecclesiastical centre. The re-emergence of wild species and conspicuous consumption in the Tenth century reflects a further transformation to secular elite centre (Loveluck, 2010/11, 11-12). The evidence of Flixborough shows that, even within the context of elite transformations, rural centres were able to exploit their territories in different ways according to the changing character of the elite.

There are also coastal Lincolnshire sites that feature prosperous mixed animal or specialist meat production economies (e.g. Mornington House, Gosberton) (Crowson, 2005). These types of site show contrasts that hint at the true diversity of rural economies and lifestyles, even suggesting that different settlements might have been involved in different exchange networks. Increasingly, work on animal bone assemblages from emporia sites, for example York, which is dominated by

sheep/goat and cattle staples but low in high-status pigs, is indicating that this site could not always command what foodstuffs reached it (O'Connor, 1991, 276-287). However, specialised production, for example in pigs, certainly *was* occurring in some regions, for example at Wicken Bonhunt, Essex (Wade, 1980, 96-102); perhaps this produce was going to rural elite centres and not the emporia (Saunders, 2001, 7-13).

This pattern seems to be corroborated by evidence in other parts of North Sea Europe. For example at Birka, Sweden, although the emporia clearly traded with their hinterlands, and perhaps commanded tax or tribute, there was no guarantee of choice in relation to meat consumption (Wigh, 2001, 136). Here it is suggested, that if the town's inhabitants had been able to command which types of slaughtered animals reached them from the mid Eighth century onwards, there would have been greater differentiation between deposits of the same date relating to different households, reflecting personal taste. In actual fact there was remarkable homogeneity between contemporary deposits relating to household rubbish deposits (Wigh, 2001, 141). This observation raises further questions about complex status relationships and contrasting identities between coastal emporia and separate elite centres. For example although '...the reasons that lie behind the foundation of the town [at Birka] remain obscure (Wigh, 2001, 135)', a royal manor was set up contemporaneously on the opposite shore of the lake on which Birka is sited, indicating that the king had an economic interest in, if not a degree of influence, over the town (Wigh, 2001, 136, Ambrosiani and Erikson, 1993, 39-45).

To conclude the discussion of animal bones, the possibility that the emporia did not command resources which arrived at them, but that other rural centres did, raises a number of questions. Our discussion has so far only compared West Norfolk with other regions of northern and eastern England, where a lack of obvious major centres has resulted in comparable potential for settlement diversity and dynamic aspects of trade, exchange and specialist production associated with less regulated landscapes. If we now turn our attention to Suffolk, a rural area that has traditionally been characterised by strict royal control over rural life, evidenced by the emporium

at Ipswich, do we see a very different pattern of rural settlements and material culture distribution?

The short answer is probably not. Newman, for example, has argued that the level of fieldwork undertaken at Ipswich has overemphasised the abundance of high status goods, settlement planning, craft specialisation and, most importantly, control of a hinterland at this focus (Newman, 1999, 34). In contrast high-status rural sites like Brandon (Carr, Tester and Murphy, 1988, 371–7), which may originate as both ecclesiastical and secular concerns in the Middle Anglo-Saxon period - and which could help re-orientate debates - have received very little detailed or systematic study (Newman, 1999, 34).

Accepting the above, the evidence of settlement in Suffolk does exhibit some key differences from West Norfolk, which hint at different mechanisms of control in operation in the rural landscape. Perhaps most notably the South East Suffolk survey seems to demonstrate far less continuity between the Early Anglo-Saxon and the Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon settlement patterns compared to West Norfolk. The only site with any clear continuity between the Early and Middle/Late Anglo- Saxon periods is Rendlesham (Newman, 2006). Interestingly, Rendlesham is interpreted as a *royal ville*, although a lack of systematic metal detecting means that it is harder to gauge the relative status of this site (ibid, 487). It might therefore be the case that in a landscape of strong emergent elite control we might expect less long-lived stable rural centres and more pioneer sites of the Middle Anglo-Saxon period.

If we look in more detail at Suffolk, however, the Middle Anglo-Saxon and later settlements do seem to represent a wide range of different identities; for example, Sutton village, which produced a substantial Ipswich Ware scatter and accompanying metalwork, was possibly of elevated status and function compared to subsidiary hamlets such as Grundisburgh (Newman, 2006, 487). The tentative suggestion of a wider rural settlement hierarchy can be used to argue against strict control of settlement trajectories by a centralised elite.

Furthermore, at sites such as Barham and Coddenham, surface finds comprising ceramic scatters and high quality metal detector finds indicative of trade and exchange, seem to indicate that sites with market or fair components were operating in Suffolk as early as the Seventh century (Newman, 2003, 109-110). Interestingly, despite a lack of Ipswich Ware, the site at Coddenham is still interpreted as having a domestic function, with the lack of Ipswich Ware being explained by the site ending in the early Eighth century (ibid, 106). Newman has now concluded that sites such as Barham and Coddenham represent important minor *emporia* that co-existed with Ipswich until the late Seventh century, when they slipped back into a 'more simple rural existence' (ibid. 108). We must also bear in mind however (from the many examples cited above) that a reduction in later Anglo-Saxon metalwork and imported material does not necessarily indicate a cessation of activity at unexcavated rural sites, but perhaps a reorientation of functions.

Despite the growing evidence in Suffolk for important rural sites with their own hinterlands in addition to Ipswich, Newman (akin to Hodges, 2008) still concludes that the *emporia* were both the 'product and probably the motor behind much of the dynamic growth seen in Middle Anglo-Saxon England' (Newman, 1999, 45-46). However, in the light of the West Norfolk evidence, further work at Suffolk sites might now also be used to reveal a greater degree of autonomy and variety among rural sites and their administrative elites. Indeed, an excellent example of contrasting spheres of material culture circulation, which perhaps reflects the existence of autonomous elites separate from Ipswich, was cited in Chapter 3 in relation to ceramics and east Suffolk. Here Newman himself has demonstrated that a territorial unit in Lothingland was using handmade pottery instead of Ipswich Ware (Newman, 2008, 17-22).

The strategic location of inland sites, and their dynamic relationship with coastal landing places, is another avenue that could be further explored in Suffolk. For example the inland centres, such as Barham and Coddenham, are located next to the River Gipping and control its confluence with the River Lark (Newman, 2003, Fig. 9.1). This could be seen as a deliberate attempt to circumvent dependency on either

the emporia or non land-holding groups, such as merchants, that to all intents and purposes, controlled coastal zones. Outside Anglo-Saxon England there is also an increasing realisation that an exploration of the relationship between coastal and inland settlements, as has been possible in West Norfolk, might go a long way to resolving key questions of the dynamics of early medieval social organisation in rural areas. Work in Flanders and Northern France, for example, is now starting to move away from the emporia-centred models, which portray exchange as the defining role of smaller 'beach trading' sites as well as the larger activity foci of the *emporia* (e.g. Hill, 2001, 79). Instead, a more complex and dynamic picture of inland and coastal centres is being presented (Loveluck and Tys, 2006).

Recent work at the unexcavated dune site of De Panne (located between the present town of De Panne, West Flanders, Belgium, and Bray-Dunes, Dept. Nord, France) which is traditionally regarded as a site of trade/exchange within the intertidal salt marshes (Ervynck et al, 1999, 101-102), has crystallised the need for a wholesale re-interpretation of how coastal landscapes operated. The overall assemblage at De Panne, including brooches and glass vessels, seems to indicate that the site was actually a burial ground, serving a wide dispersed community, between the Fifth and Ninth centuries; even some of the 12 coins (12 sceattas and a denier firmly dated to 670-750) may not be objects of trade (Deckers, forthcoming, 4). As a result, the relationship between this site and a presumed inland ecclesiastical or secular elite presence has had to be re-assessed. It is now considered more likely that other sites on the Flemish plain, that are rich in regional imports of pottery but not necessarily metalwork, are the more likely candidates for the coastal sites of exchange from the Seventh and Eighth centuries onwards (Tys, 2005, 262-263). At Raversijde, for example Badorf wares and a Carolingian brooch have been recovered (Tys, 2003, 231). Interestingly, as in West Norfolk, it is argued that sites on the Flemish coastal plain involved in trade and exchange from an early date were populated by free landholders involved in specialised production (salt, fish and wool) who interacted with merchants and not directly with the emporia sites (Verhulst, 1998, Deckers, forthcoming).

The identification of numerous small sites of trade and exchange in the Flemish coastal plain, with lifestyles, and therefore social identities, that may have existed outside the traditional nodes of control, has also resulted in a need to revisit past interpretations of sites labelled emporia themselves. For example, the role and nature of control at Domburg, Zeeland, Netherlands, which was a settlement and important focus of exchange (coinage) in the dune belt during the Seventh and Eighth centuries, but less so in the Ninth century, could be reappraised (Verhulst, 1999, 46-47). There is now a suggestion that sites such as Domburg, although subject to tolls, were not always taxed centres of royal control (Loveluck and Tys, 2006), a situation that could be applicable to a number of the West Norfolk fenland sites. Other phenomena that deserve more attention are the polyfocal sites, consisting of administrative, artisan and exchange foci that emerge in the Meuse/Mass valleys from the Sixth/Seventh centuries, for example, Maastricht (Dijkman and Ervynck 1998, 3, 1999, 46-51), Namur (Plumier, 1999, 24-30) and Huy (Peters, 1997, 110-113, 1999, 31-35). These sites, as was also observed at Rudham in West Norfolk, suggest a great deal of complexity within administrative elites.

Perhaps most importantly, work in Flanders has now also started to interpret unregulated early coastal sites against a wider context of emergent inland estates, characterised by more central elite control. This can be directly paralleled at West Norfolk sites that start as unregulated sites of exchange and later acquire elite control. For example, by the Ninth century the (secular) Counts of Flanders emerged to exert great authority around Bruges and Ghent (Nicholas,1992, 36). This might in part explain why earlier sites of exchange, of the Domburg-type, are discontinued or greatly transformed. Near De Panne, for example, the present village of Andinkereke, where a Carolingian brooch has been recovered (Carnier, 1999, 16-17), was connected to the abbey of St Bertin in St Omer, N. France, by the Eighth century (Deckers forthcoming, Carnier, 1996). Another inland Carolingian focus which might represent a controlled elite centre is located at Werken, where Seventh and Ninth century finds include imported Black Burnished Ware, Badorf Ware pottery and a sceatta (Van Belligen, 2008). This putative centre of elite authority is succeeded by a medieval motte and bailey castle (Deckers, forthcoming).

In addition to the recognition of coastal and inland sites involved in trade and exchange from an early date in Flanders, the interpretation of later settlement development is also important. As well the sites mentioned above, sites like the fortified trading settlement at Veurne, further upstream from De Panne in the Yser valley, raise some interesting questions concerning the evolving nature of secular control. In this part of Europe the traditional thinking is that the emergence of the circular fortress and ringwork is intrinsically linked to a perceived 'Viking' threat (Henderikx, 1995). It is also sometimes argued, as with later castles, that the phenomenon of the fortified settlement is actually linked to the emergence of 'feudal' lordship by the Tenth century (Janssen, 1990, 226). However, at Veurne there is some documentary evidence which may suggest an earlier focus of trade and exchange, with exploitation of a number of landing places along Yser, which the Vikings then attacked in the Ninth century (Verhulst, 2002, 63, Deckers, forthcoming). In short, it might be the case that the apparent *de novo* fortifications of the Tenth century were actually positioned by elite groups to formalise earlier less regulated sites of exchange. Following this argument it might be the case that other sites in North Sea Europe which acquire enclosures, might also signify increased regulation of economic lifestyles and not a response to 'Viking threat.' More site sequences would need to be excavated to substantiate this claim, but it should not be surprising in the future, to see the complex-site histories identified in West Norfolk repeated in many other regions.

## Overall conclusion and Future directions

Drawing together observations from Chapters 12 and 13, the West Norfolk work carried out during this project, a combination of extensive regional and detailed case-study analyses, has revealed something of the diversity, complexity and change in lifestyles within a coastal sub-region of Anglo-Saxon England, and obtained a number of important results.

Perhaps most significantly, the quality of results obtained by superimposed integrated surveys – combining observations of settlement morphologies and changing material culture profiles - has allowed the recognition of a number of different settlements with different stories to tell, concerning both their origins and their development. This has allowed for the true diversity of social identities (and particularly elite identities) to be identified in rural areas, but it has also allowed interpretations to be offered on how these identities might have changed over time.

In addition, by placing detailed results against a wider backdrop of the regional circulation of material culture, we have been able to see just how exceptional rural centres are within a wider region and use portable material culture to address questions of relative status. This has allowed for changing status associated with various material classes found at settlements to be explored. It has been concluded that many factors, both spatial (coastal versus inland) and temporal (changing exchange networks) are relevant determinants when exploring questions of changing social status – an important facet of social identities - in rural regions.

Specifically, this research has been able to use detailed work to re-appraise two existing models of early medieval settlement and society. Firstly, there is the emporium-centred model which previously portrayed early medieval society as oriented around socially embedded exchange, controlled by royal elites. Secondly, from a more methodological viewpoint, there is the 'productive' sites debate where, although moving on from the emporia model, common facets of sites which are only partially investigated have been used too readily to illustrate wider economic trends, especially ecclesiastical control over trade and exchange. Following the methodologies pioneered at sites such as Cottam (Richards, 2003) this project has combined geophysics, fieldwalking and detailed plotting of metal finds to 'upgrade' the research approach to 'productive' sites.

In re-appraising the emporium-centred model, the results of this study now add to the growing awareness in North Sea Europe that diverse rural settlement hierarchies and the actors who populated them were key factors in driving social change as

much as traditionally documented elites and the emporia. The evidence from West Norfolk has also demonstrated there might be a great diversity of social groups, not only rural elites, even within an apparent class of site, like the 'productive' sites or 'rural centres'. Most importantly, the recovery of portable material culture such as coinage, pottery and metalwork and key boundary features (from geophysical survey) allowed changes over time within these social groups to be interpreted.

Key areas where new insights have been possible include the identification of rural centres that emerge early (from the Early Anglo-Saxon period onwards) and subsequently maintain an overall stability of location; the development of 'pioneer' sites of the Middle Anglo-Saxon period onwards; and the huge but hitherto unrecognised transformations that occur during the period of Scandinavian/Anglo-Scandinavian influence in the Ninth-Tenth century. Observations at the rural sites during the period of Scandinavian/Anglo-Scandinavian influence have also provided our best evidence for changes at sites being linked to transformations in ethnic identity. Detailed investigation of sites has allowed all of these topics to be explored: 'stable' sites might actually feature dynamic transformations in functional zones over time; 'pioneer' sites might have surprisingly complex occupation sequences, and transformations associated with Scandinavian influences at sites are highly complex. There may, for example, be continuity within settlement morphology even while dress-related metalwork transforms, raising question of whether portable material culture represents the movement of ideas about dress, as opposed to movement of actual people. On the other hand there are also sites where settlement morphologies do transform as Scandinavian influenced material culture arrives. This illustrates perfectly the probable complexity of social identities now apparent in early medieval West Norfolk.

Furthermore the extensive synthetic work carried out during this project has shown that West Norfolk as a region does have some distinctive characteristics, shared by some regions but not by others – in addition to the complexity observed at its rural centres. Most clearly, the changing social dynamic between coastal and inland areas

is a key factor for the interpretation of the West Norfolk region, as is also the case in Yorkshire and Lincolnshire.

Some commentators (e.g. Hamerow, 2002, Rogerson, 2005) had already drawn attention to 'lower order' producer sites on the Fenland coast, however by highlighting coastal and inland dynamics this project has also highlighted the diverse social groups that might have contributed to the observed lifestyles at these sites. These diverse social groups include non land-holding elites such as merchants and freemen as documented in Domesday Book, and an ongoing task is to try to identify their material signature in the archaeological record. This is not easy where a number of social groups may have interacted at a single settlement focus and perhaps, as is the case in Frisia, the same individuals might have performed different roles (e.g. merchant and farmer) at different times (Lebecq, 1983). A brief consideration of the evidence of Carolingian Europe has also shown that these social groups regularly interacted with sites rooted in production (e.g. salt production). As a result these communities might have actually attained some status, and could have existed outside direct control from inland elites who may have only attempted to tax or toll certain social groups at certain points in the landscape.

The influence of social groups who might sit outside the jurisdiction of ecclesiastical and secular elites at inland estate centres adds depth to important regional themes for the social and economic development of West Norfolk between 450-1100. These themes included the development of settlement hierarchy in the absence of an urban focus, the importance of coastal production, the possible co-existence of systems of both 'exchange' and 'trade' and the nature of controlled/unregulated exchange at 'stable' rural centres. These themes need to be explored in other regions, for example Suffolk, where centralised elite control has traditionally been regarded as more of a feature.

Perhaps the most important point overall is that the undertaking of this detailed work has illuminated some of the generalisations of existing models and started to use material evidence to present a more detailed picture. This can bridge some of

the gap between the post-Roman lacunae in archaeological evidence and the complex tenurial picture that we see immediately after the Norman Conquest at Domesday. In some ways this can be seen as a philosophical standpoint in that, while it may be easy to derive grand social or economic models from superficial treatment of archaeological data at an extensive scale, detailed and time consuming work means that observations are backed up by satisfactory data.

Thus, although the extent to which surface finds and survey results from the case-study sites have pushed the interpretation of observed transformations as far as is reasonable, it is no longer tenable for future work on 'productive' sites to ignore these methodologies. Indeed, the likely validity of the interpretative conclusions from surface survey alone was confirmed by the evaluation exercise undertaken at Sedgeford. Here, the important transformation in settlement character suspected from the surface surveys was confirmed and chronological precision was added to the interpretation. This type of observation serves to confirm that similar transformations to those encountered at excavated sites such as Flixborough (Loveluck, 2007b, 162-163) are not exceptional and, where preservation or opportunity allows, such sequences might be recovered from numerous rural sites.

In the future, targeted trial evaluation is desperately needed at the case study sites and at other surface finds sites to add chronological precision to early medieval surface finds data in rural regions. Whenever there is an opportunity to re-appraise existing data or to undertake more detailed work, this concluding synthesis has suggested that we might also expect to recover similarly detailed and diverse patterns to those observed in West Norfolk across other regions of North Sea Europe. These findings should allow us to continue the re-characterisation of early medieval rural social identities as complex, dynamic and ever changing.

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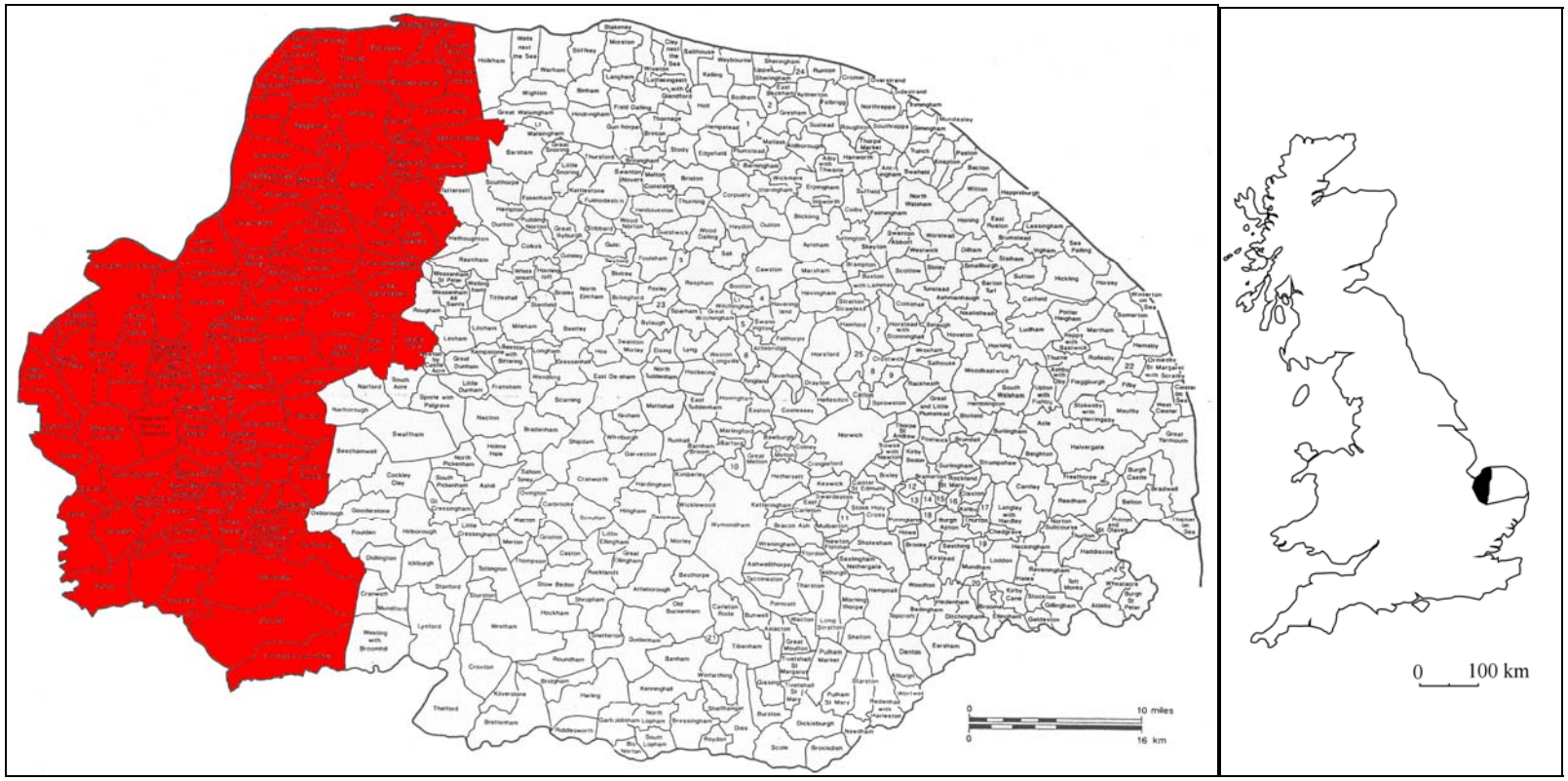



**Figure 1: West Norfolk Study area (red) within Norfolk, showing parishes (left) (adapted from Wade Martins, 1983) and West Norfolk within the UK (right).**

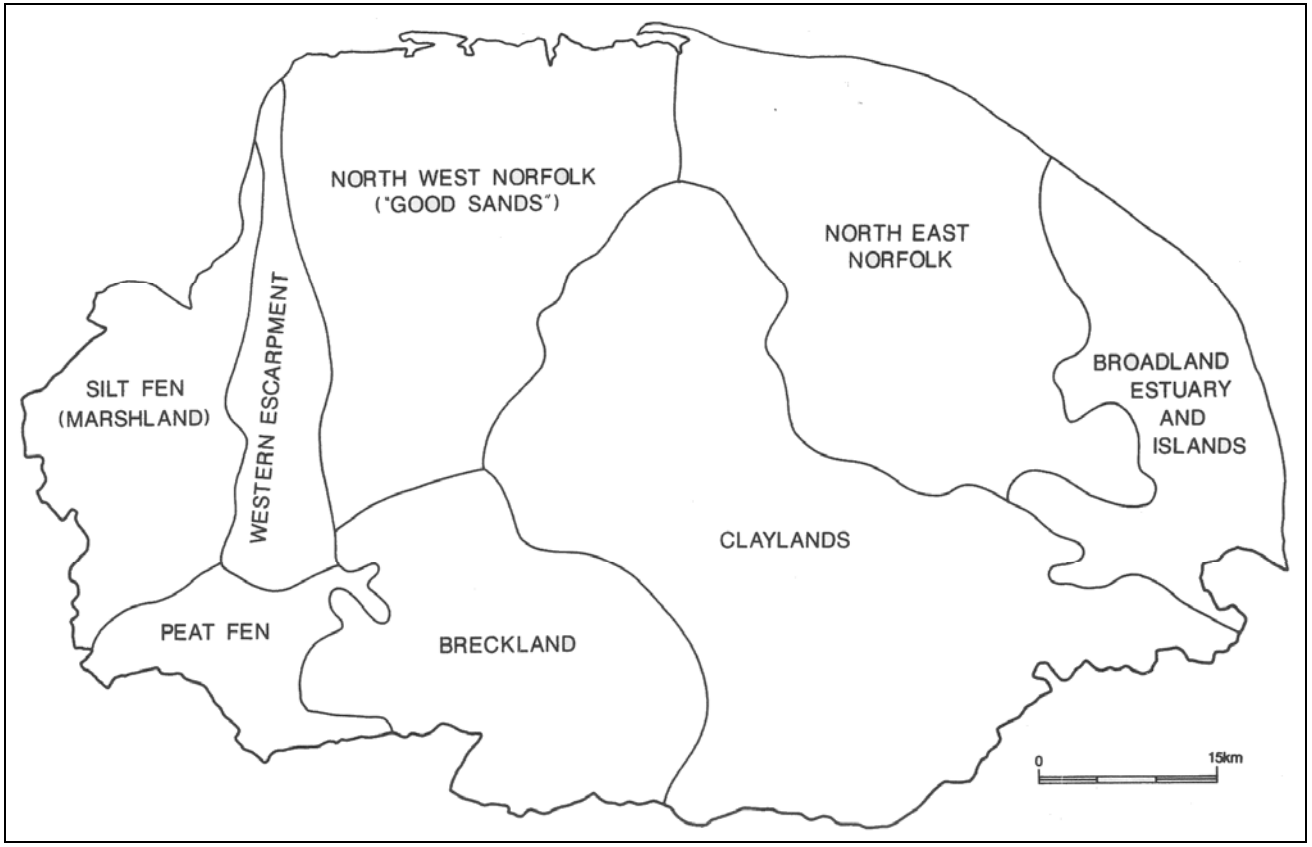



**Figure 2: The Soil Landscapes of Norfolk (after Williamson, 1993).**

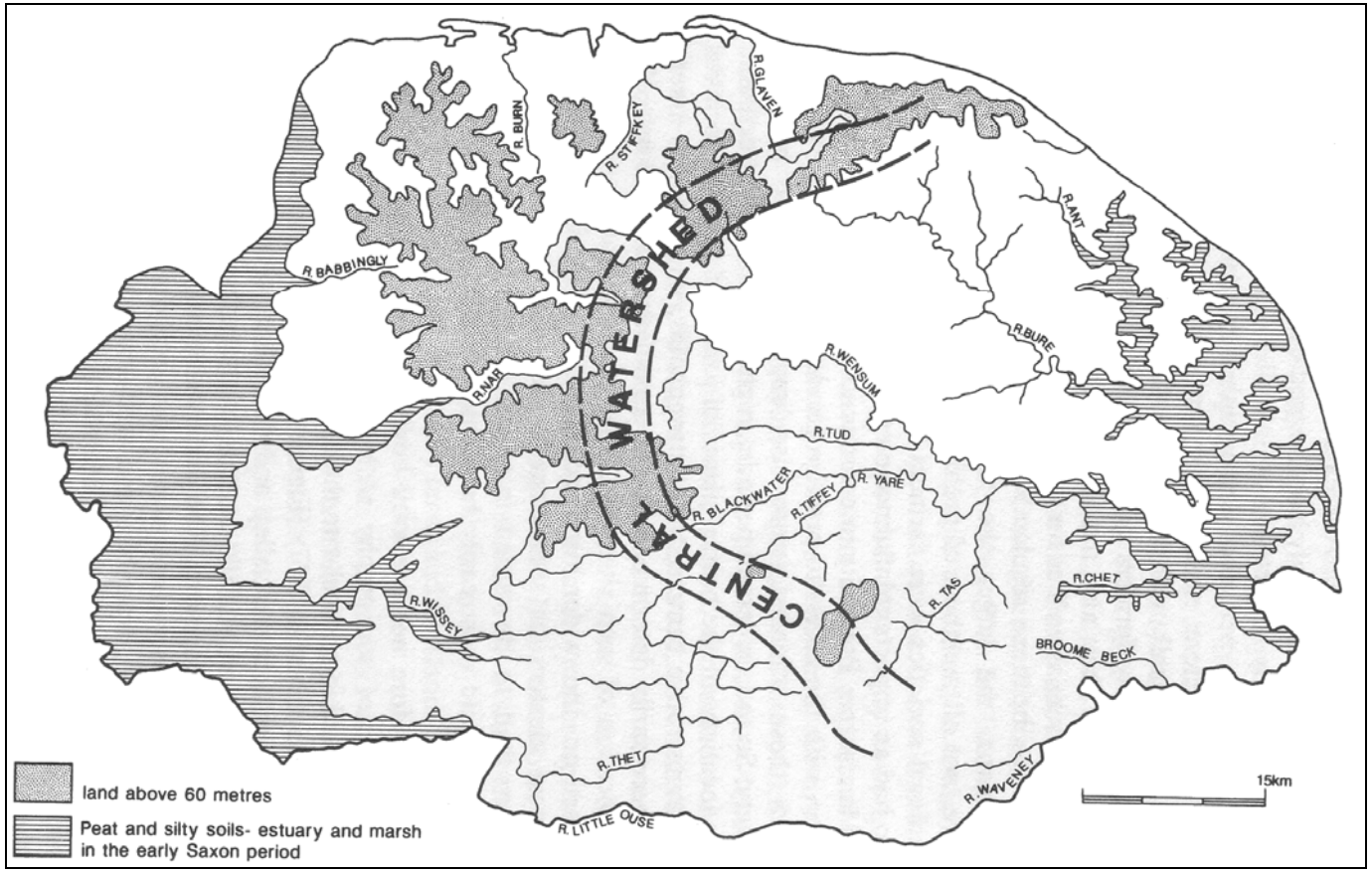



**Figure 3: The Topography of Norfolk (after Williamson, 1993).**

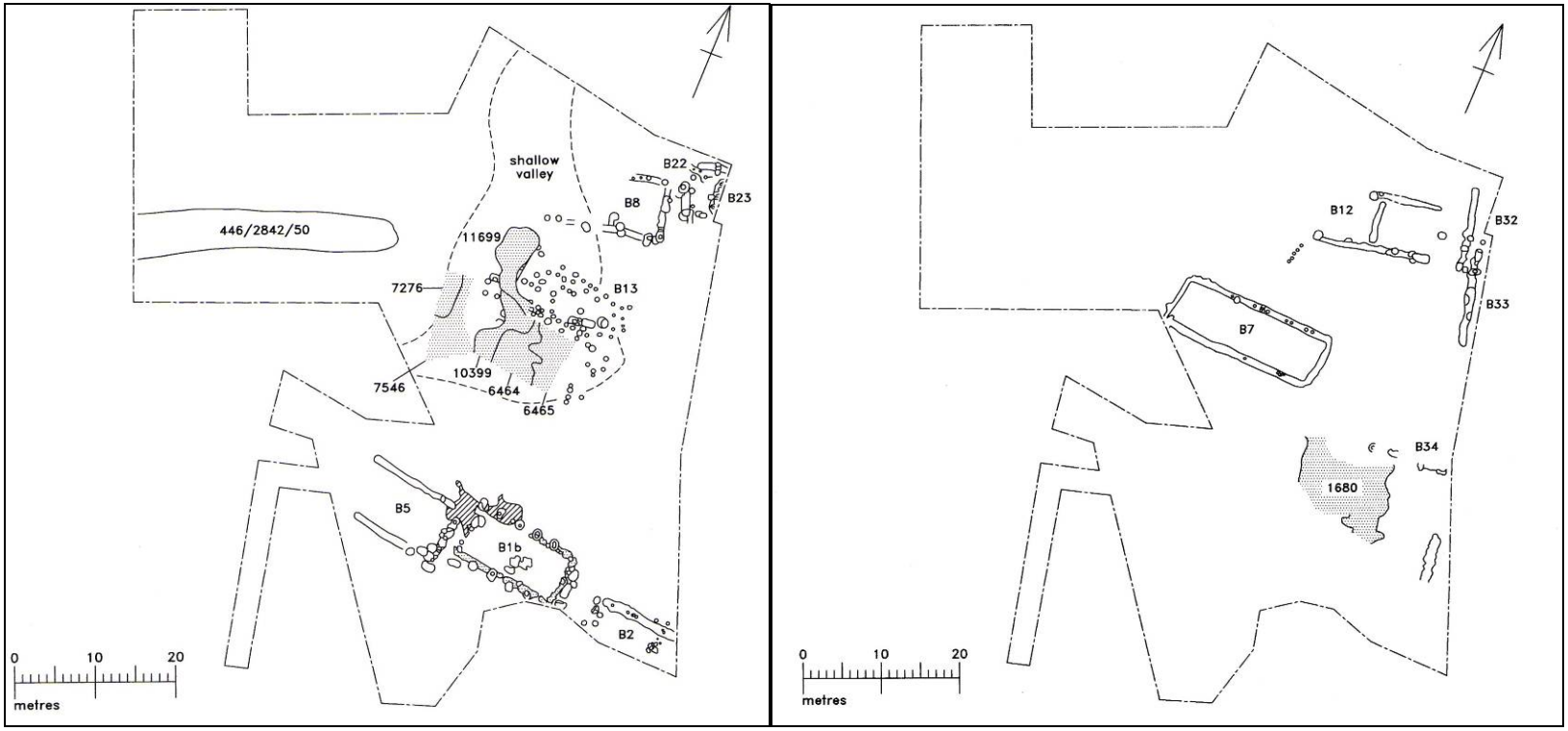



**Figure 4: Dynamic settlement sequence at Flixborough (N. Lincs), Mid-Late Eighth Century (left), Mid Tenth Century (right) (after Loveluck, 2007b).**

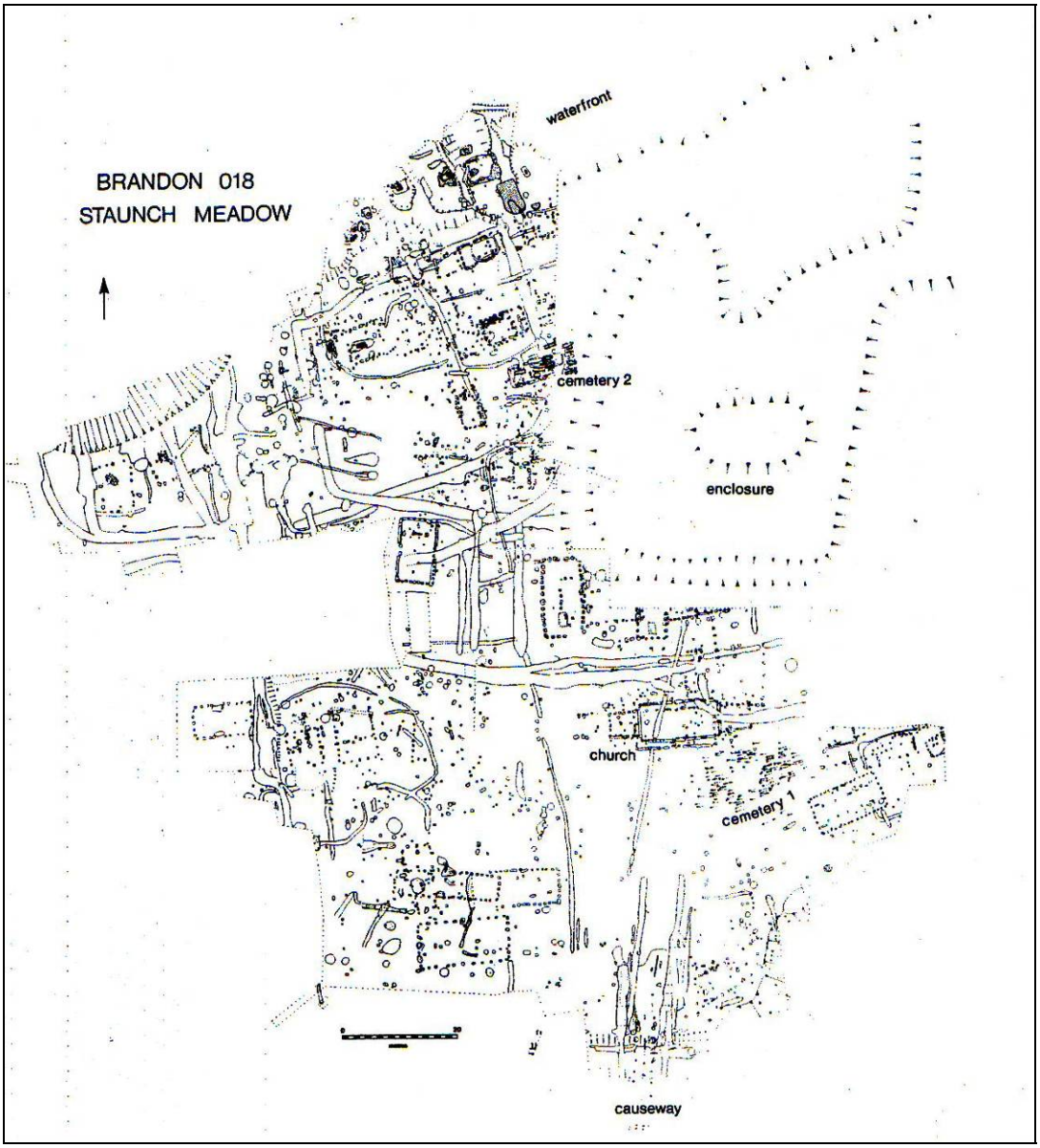



**Figure 5: Middle Anglo-Saxon settlement at Brandon (Suffolk) (after Carr, Tester and Murphy, 1988).**

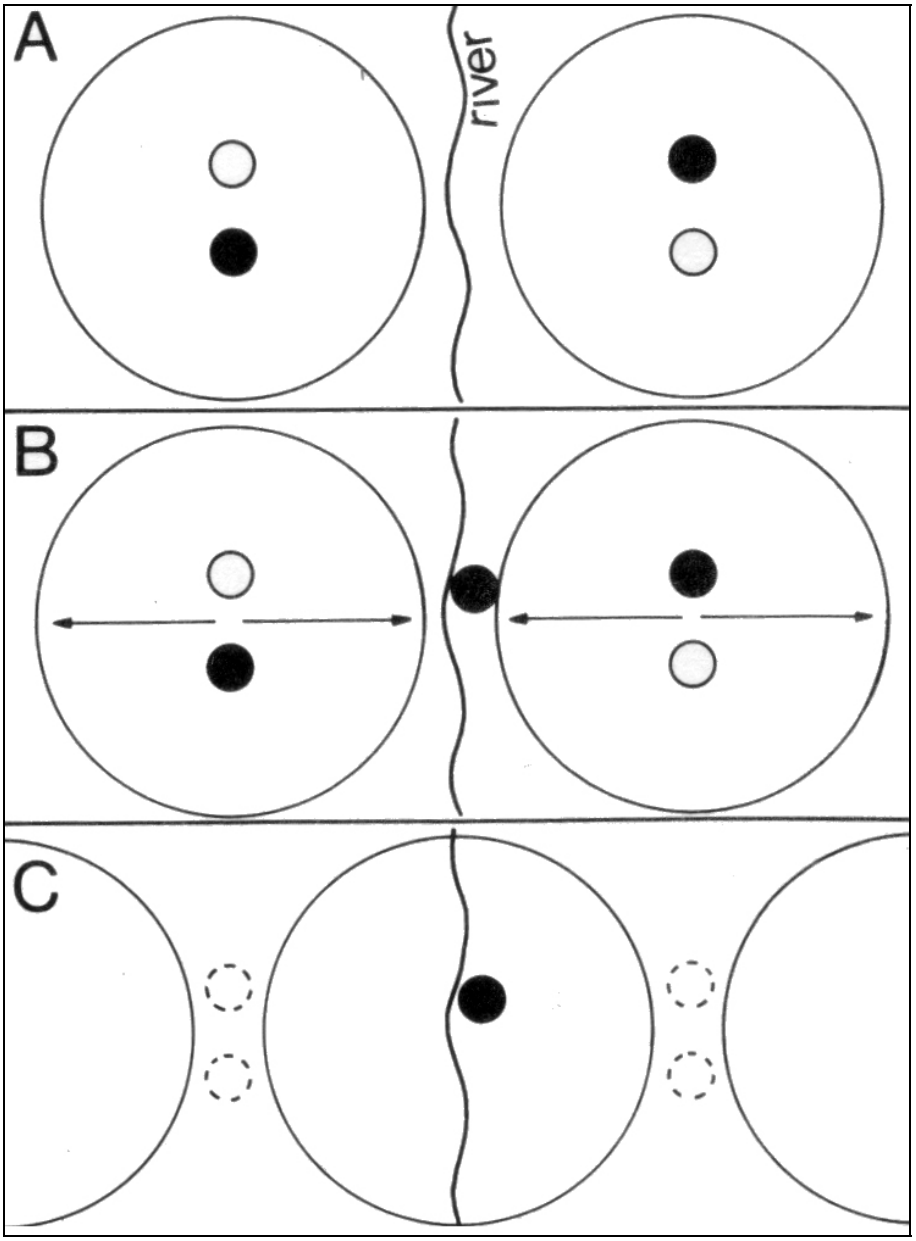



**Figure 6: 'The Middle Saxon shuffle' (after Arnold and Wardle, 1981).** Early Anglo-Saxon settlement (A), replaced by Middle Anglo-Saxon settlement in river valley (B), Early Anglo-Saxon settlement abandoned (C).

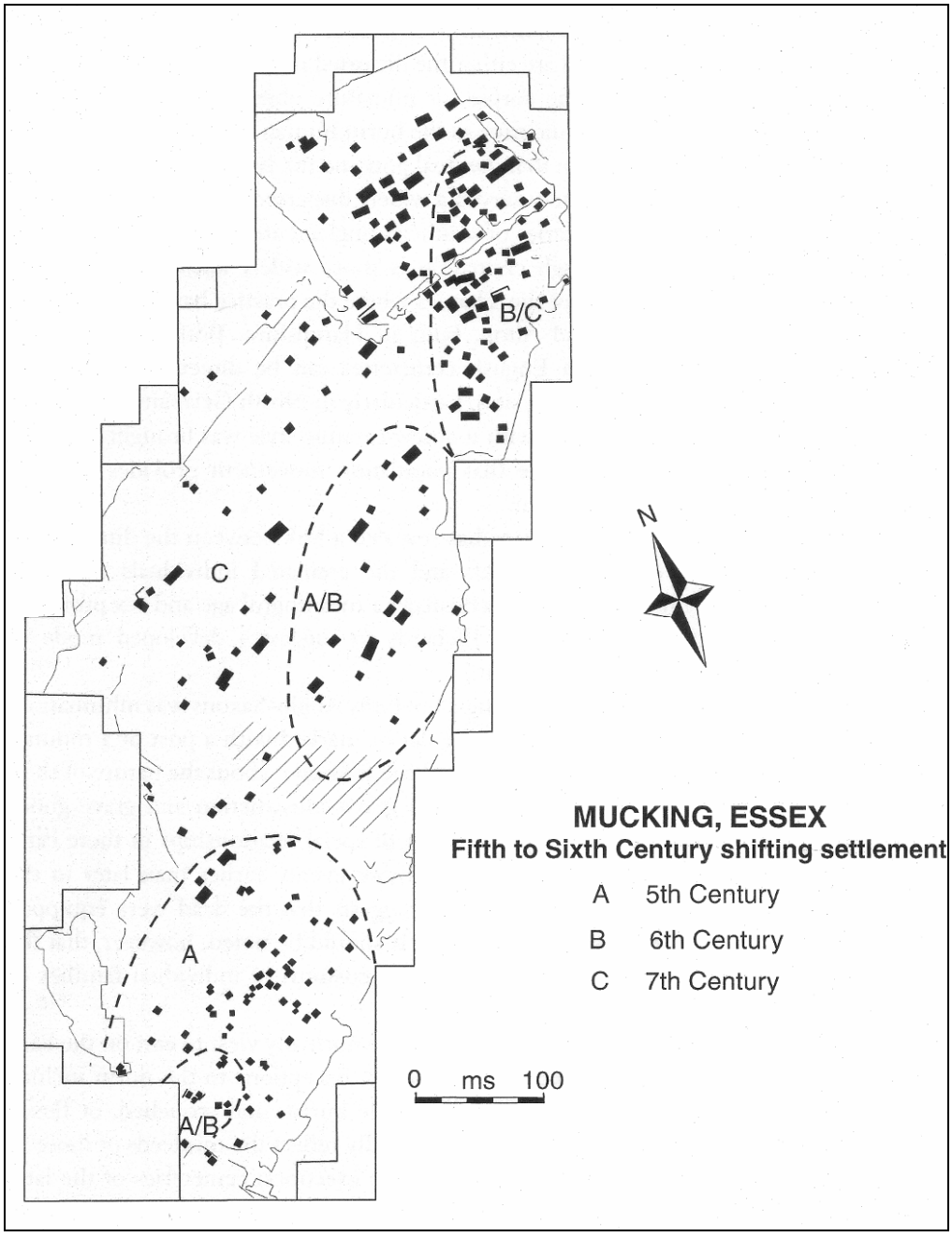



**Figure 7: Early Anglo Saxon settlement at Mucking (Essex) (Reynolds, 1999, after Hamerow, 1993).**

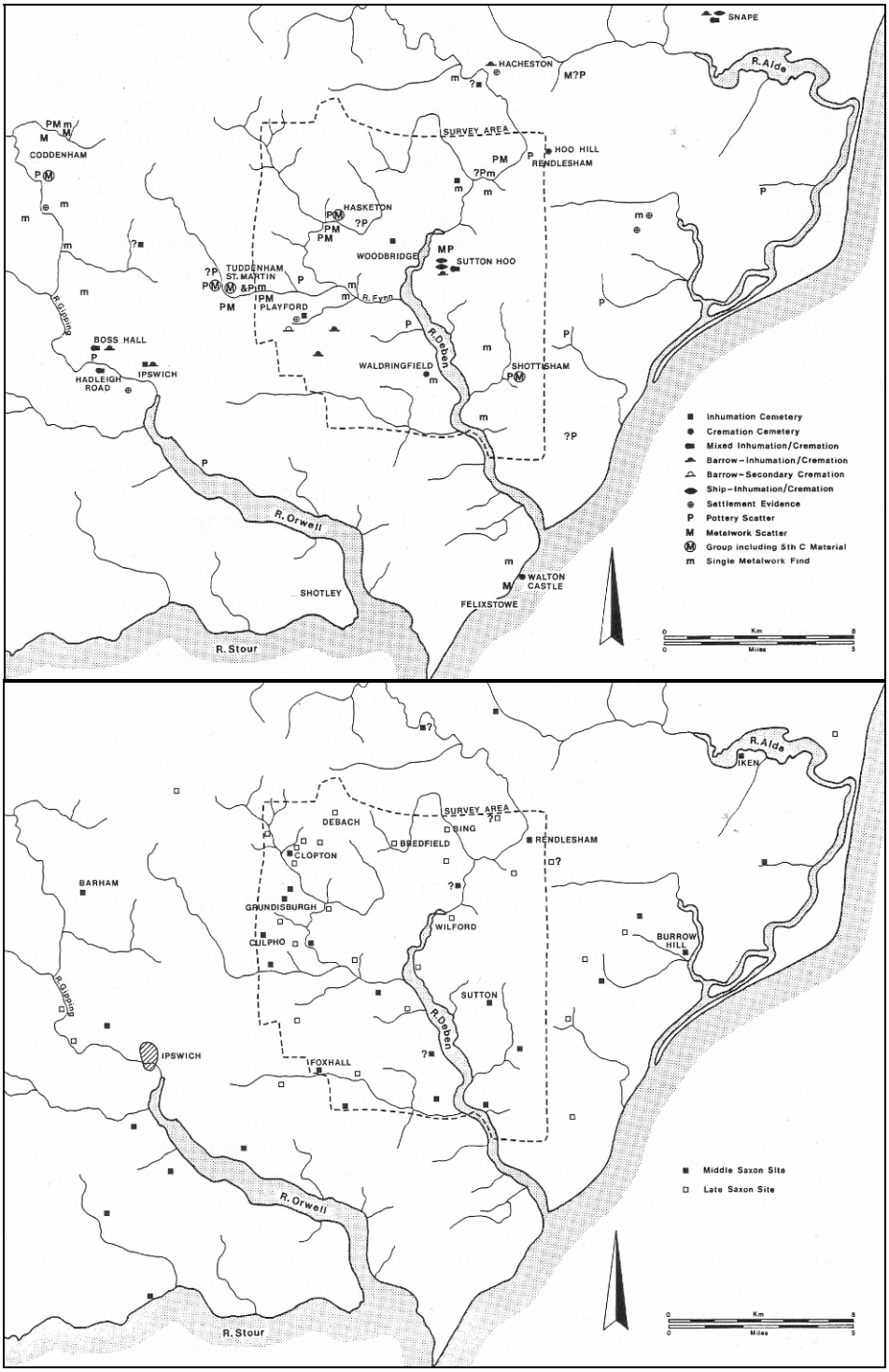



**Figure 8: East Anglia Kingdom Survey (South East Suffolk), Early Saxon settlement (top), Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon settlement (bottom) (after Newman, 1992).**

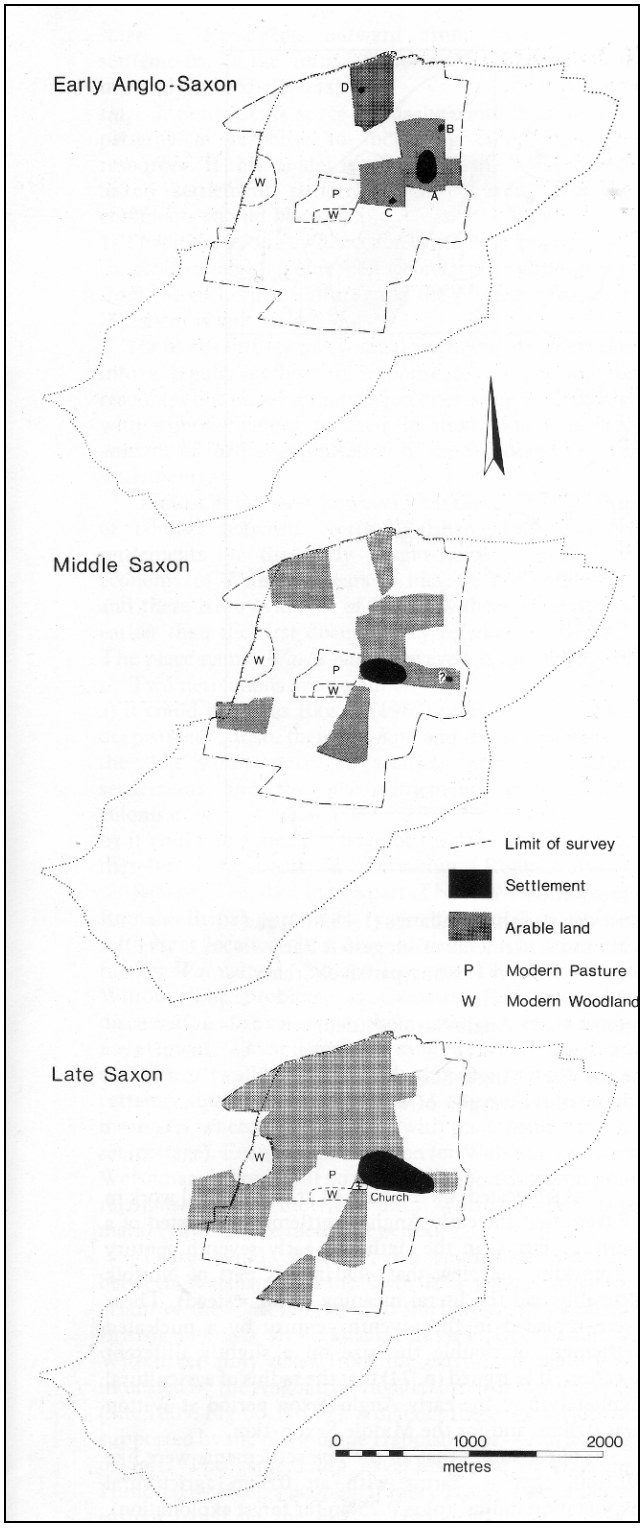



**Figure 9: Anglo-Saxon settlement and cultivation at Witton (Norfolk) (after Lawson, 1983).**

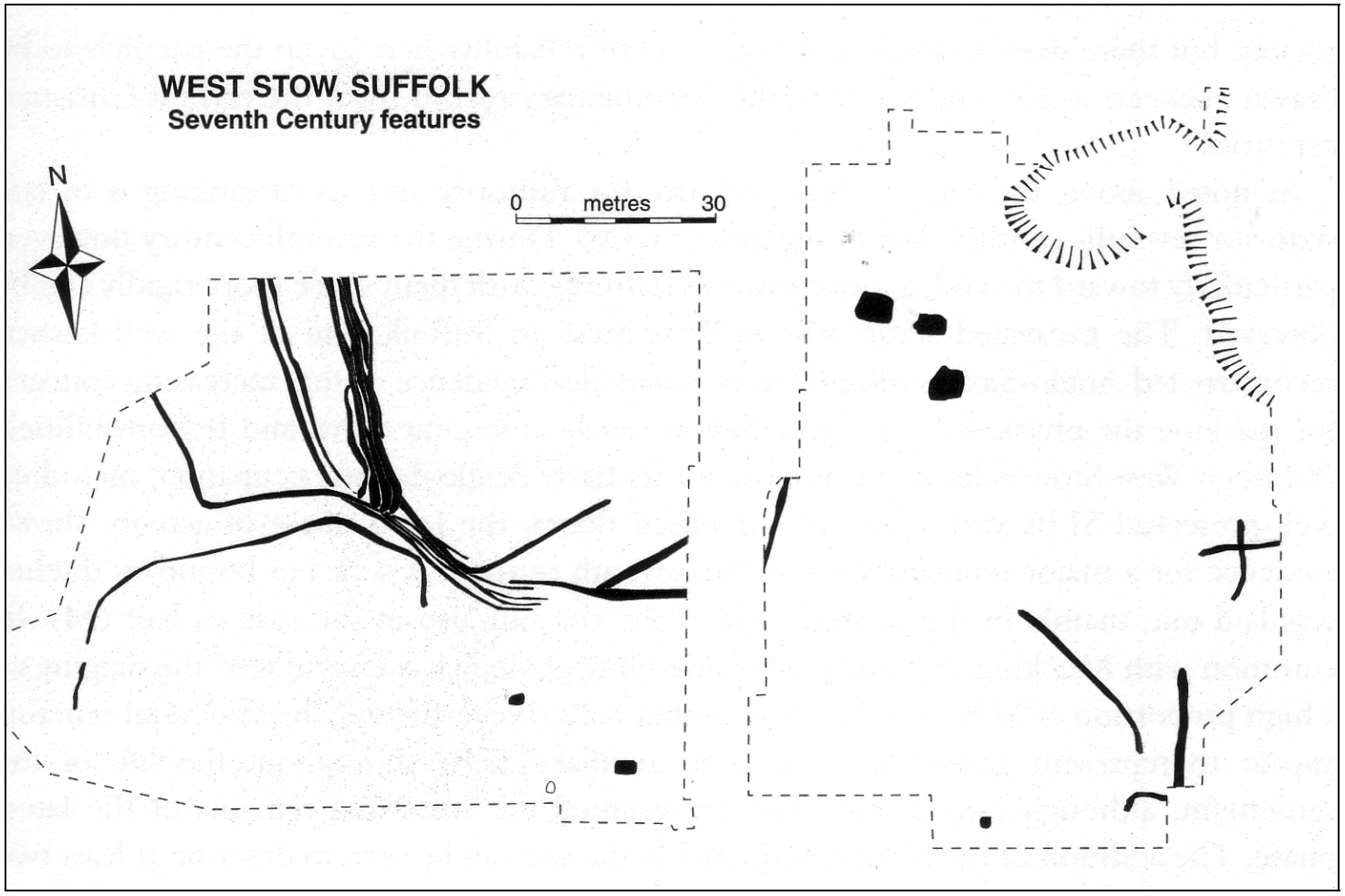



**Figure 10: Seventh century occupation at West Stow (Suffolk) (Reynolds, 1999 after West, 1985).**

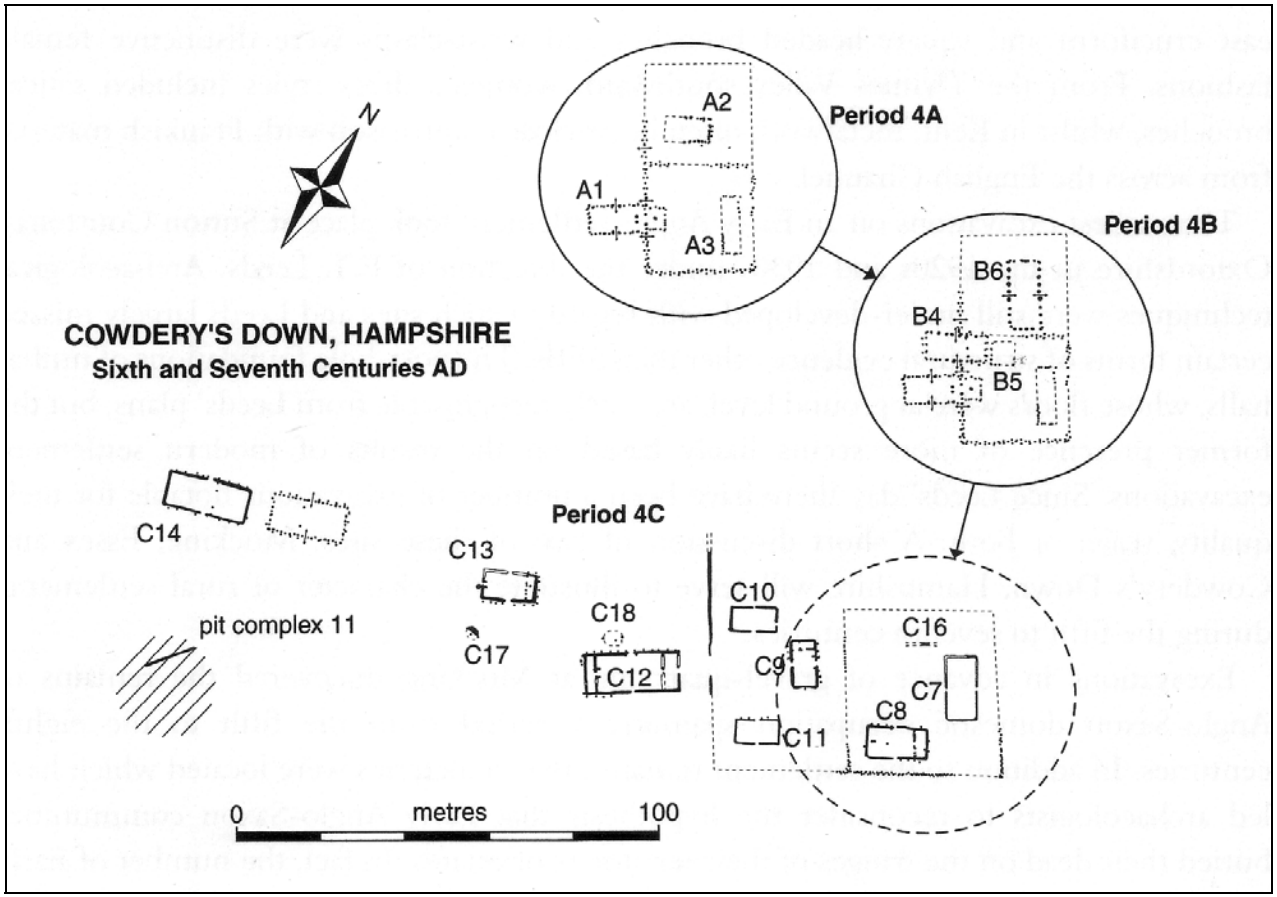
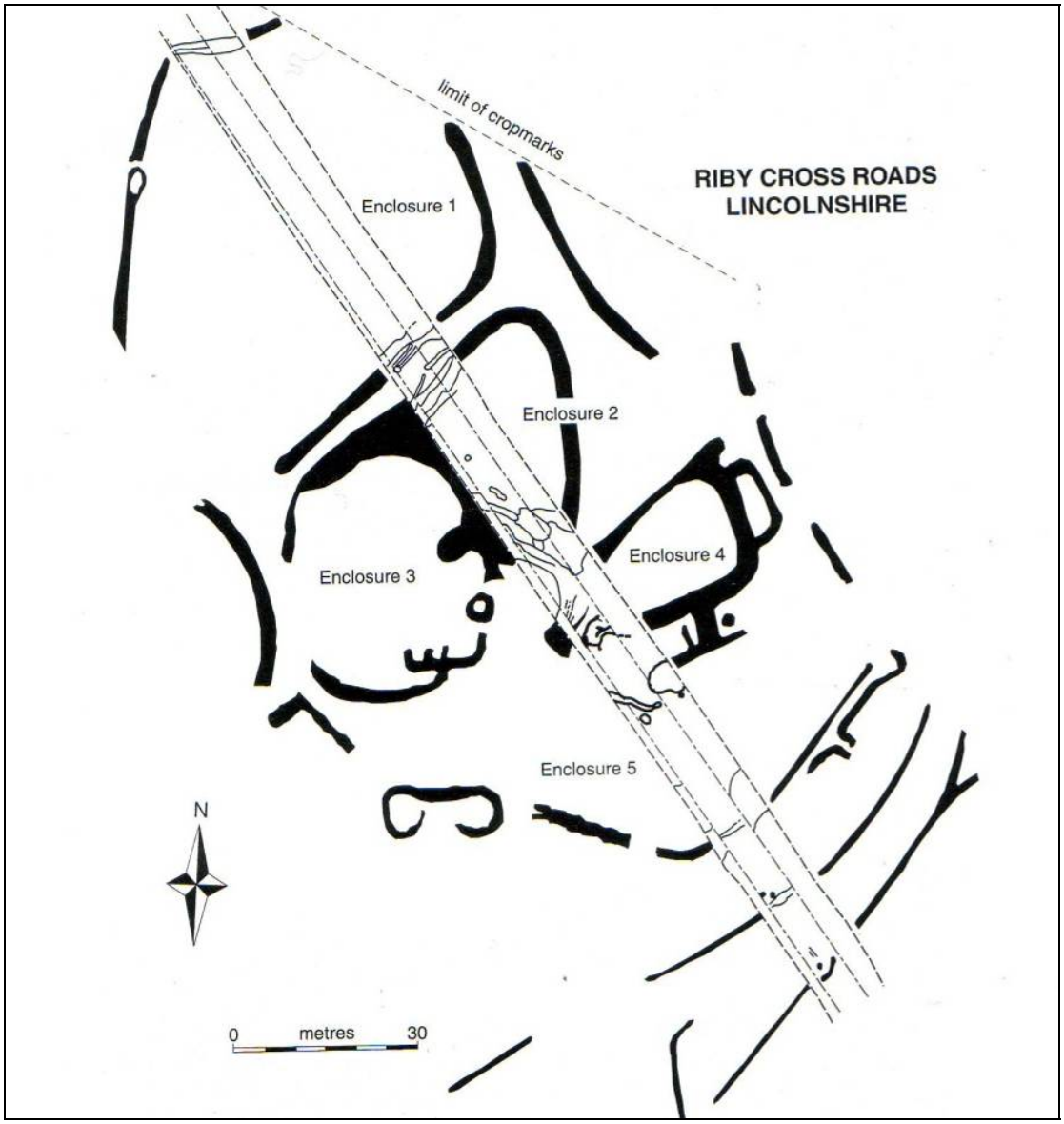



**Figure 11: Sixth and Seventh century occupation at Cowdery's Down (Hampshire) (Reynolds 1999, after Millet and James, 1983).**

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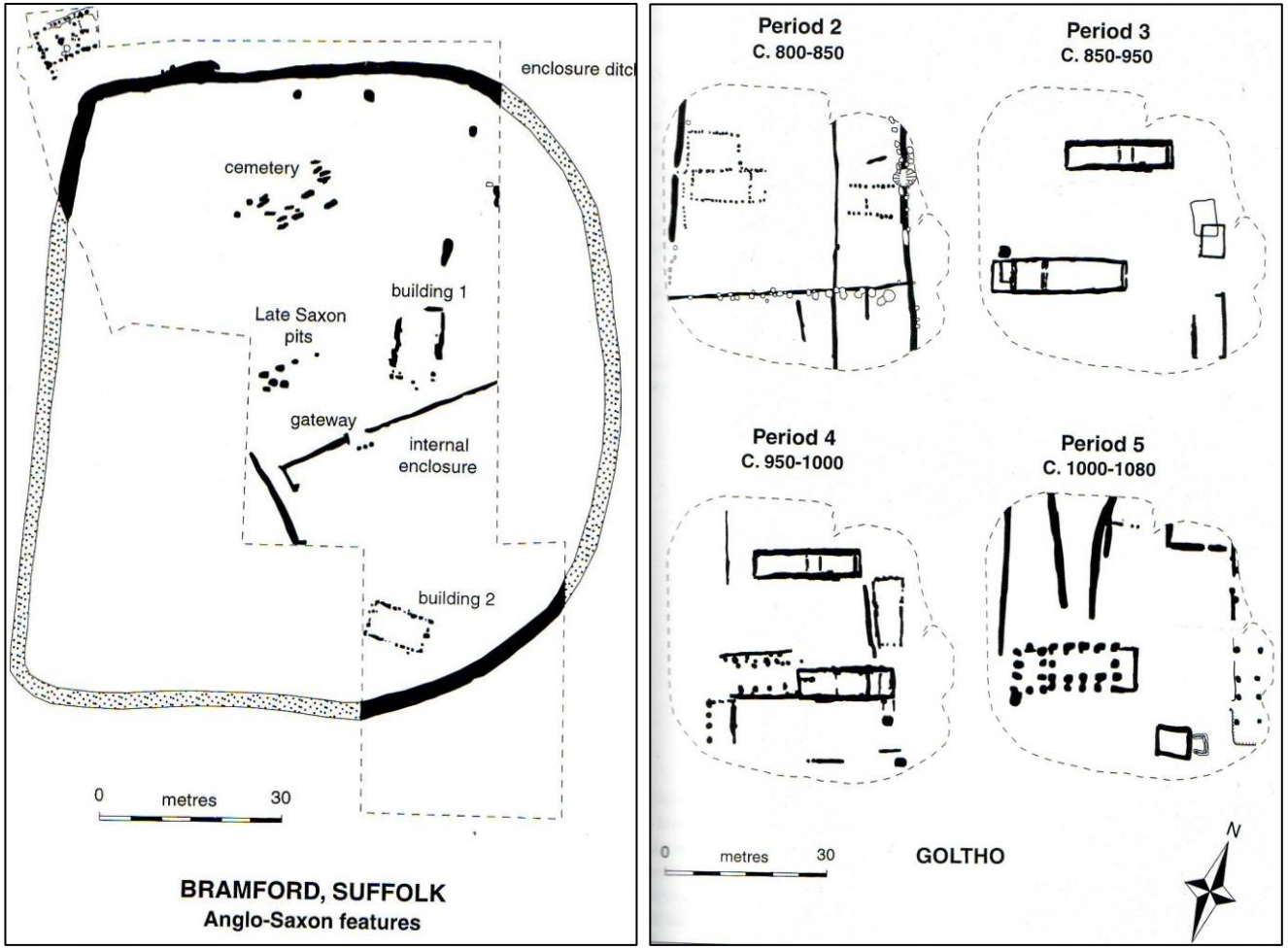


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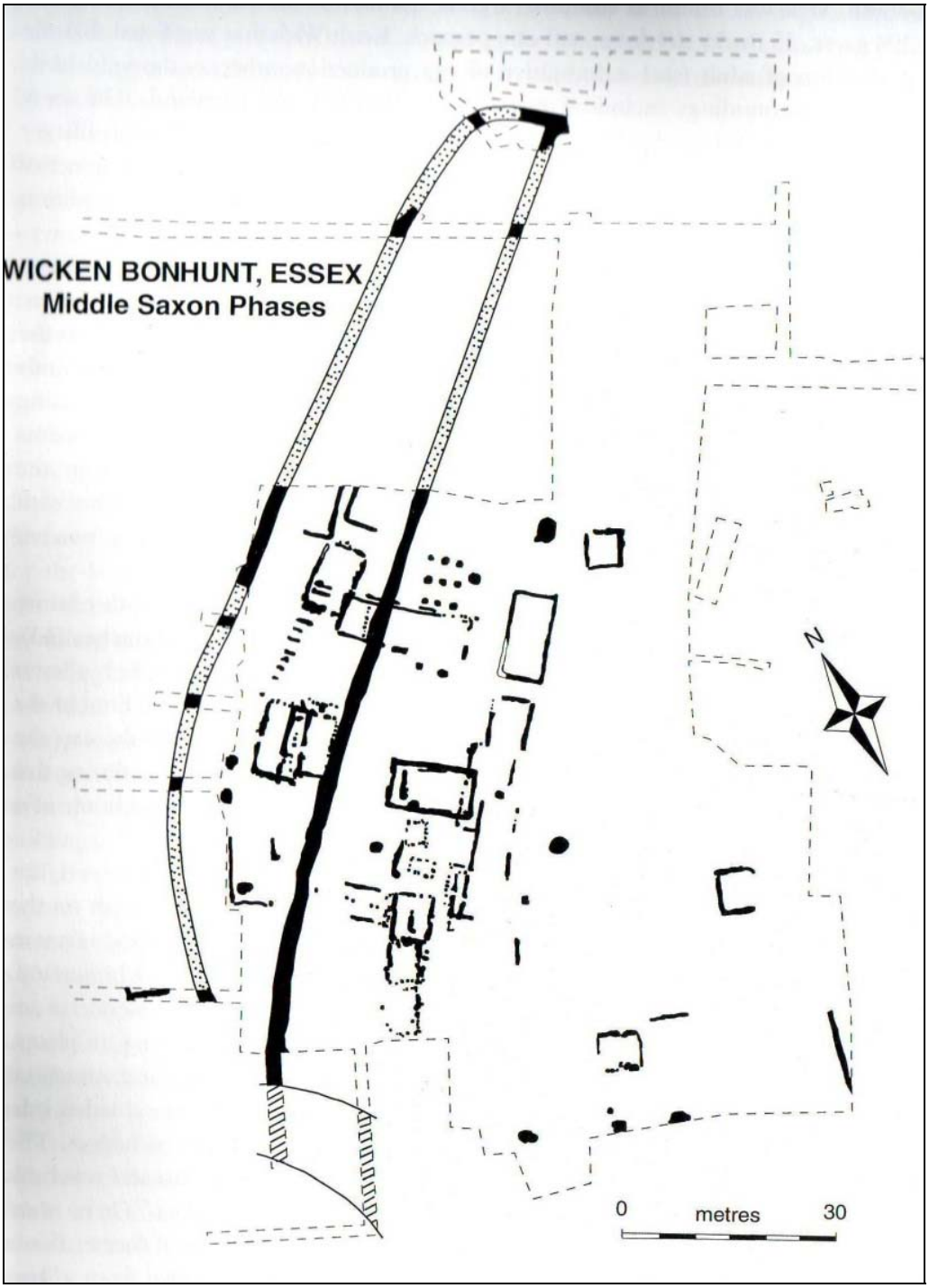


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**Figure 15: Geophysical survey at Cottam B (left) and metal detector finds at Cottam A and B (right). Cottam B is northern activity focus (after Richards, 2003).**

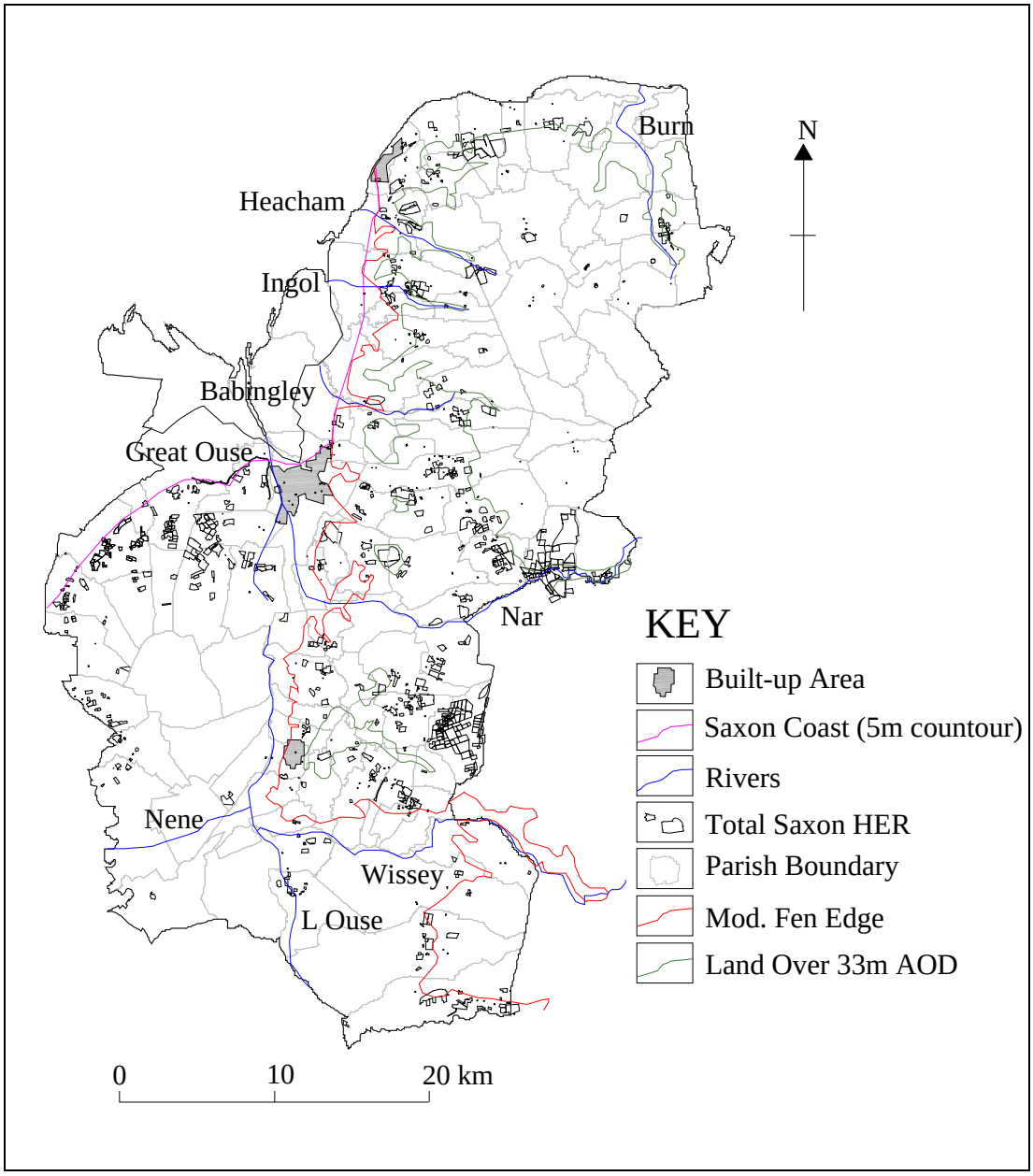



**Figure 16: West Norfolk Survey Area, showing Major Rivers (named), landscape Zones, Anglo-Saxon Coastline (after Hall and Coles, 1994), Built-Up Zones and total NHER coverage for Saxon polygons.**

See **Figure 1** for the location of the West Norfolk study area in Norfolk and the UK.

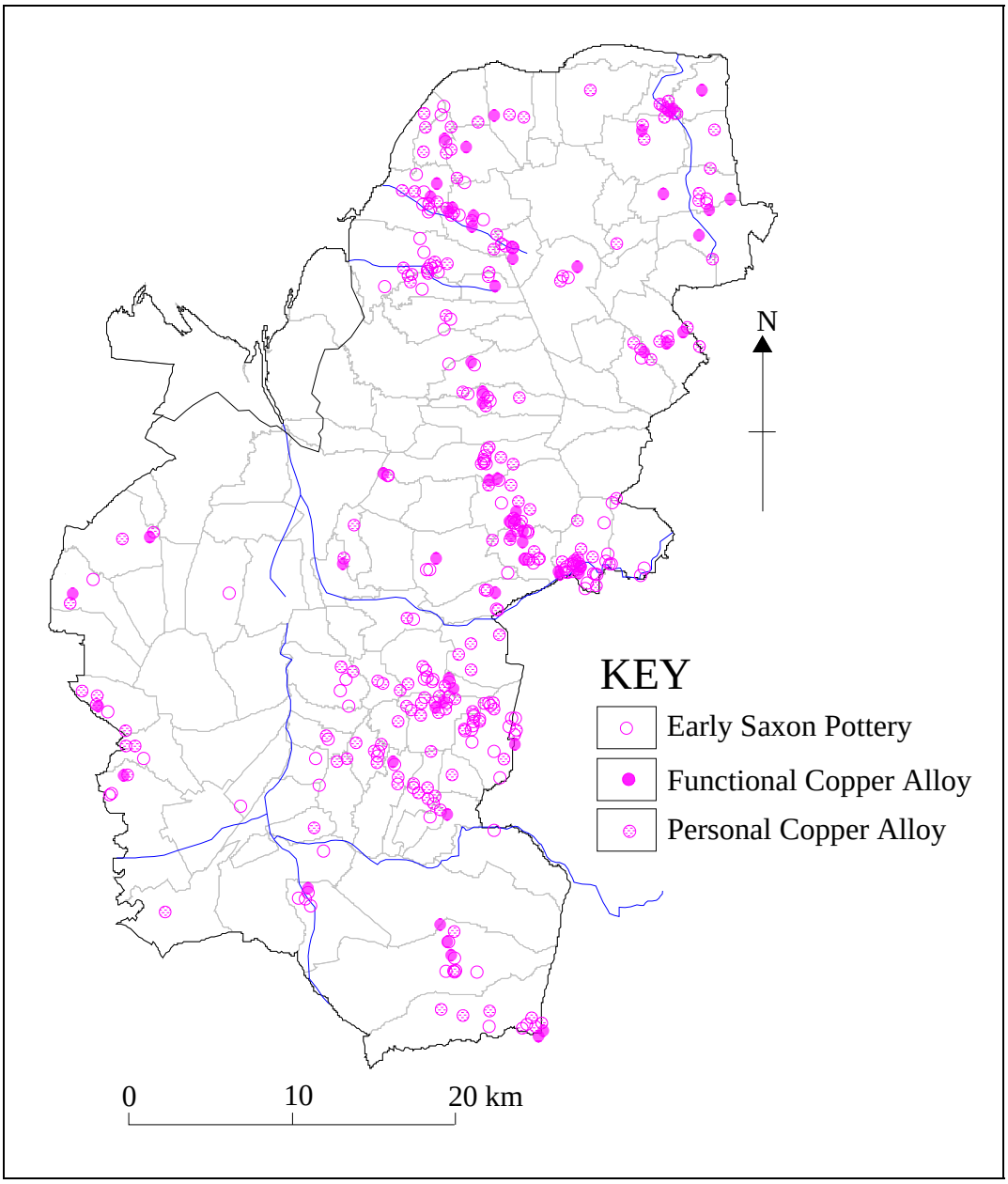



**Figure 17: Findspots of Early Anglo-Saxon pottery, functional and personal copper alloy artefacts** (NHER data, see Chapter 4 for definition of functional and personal).

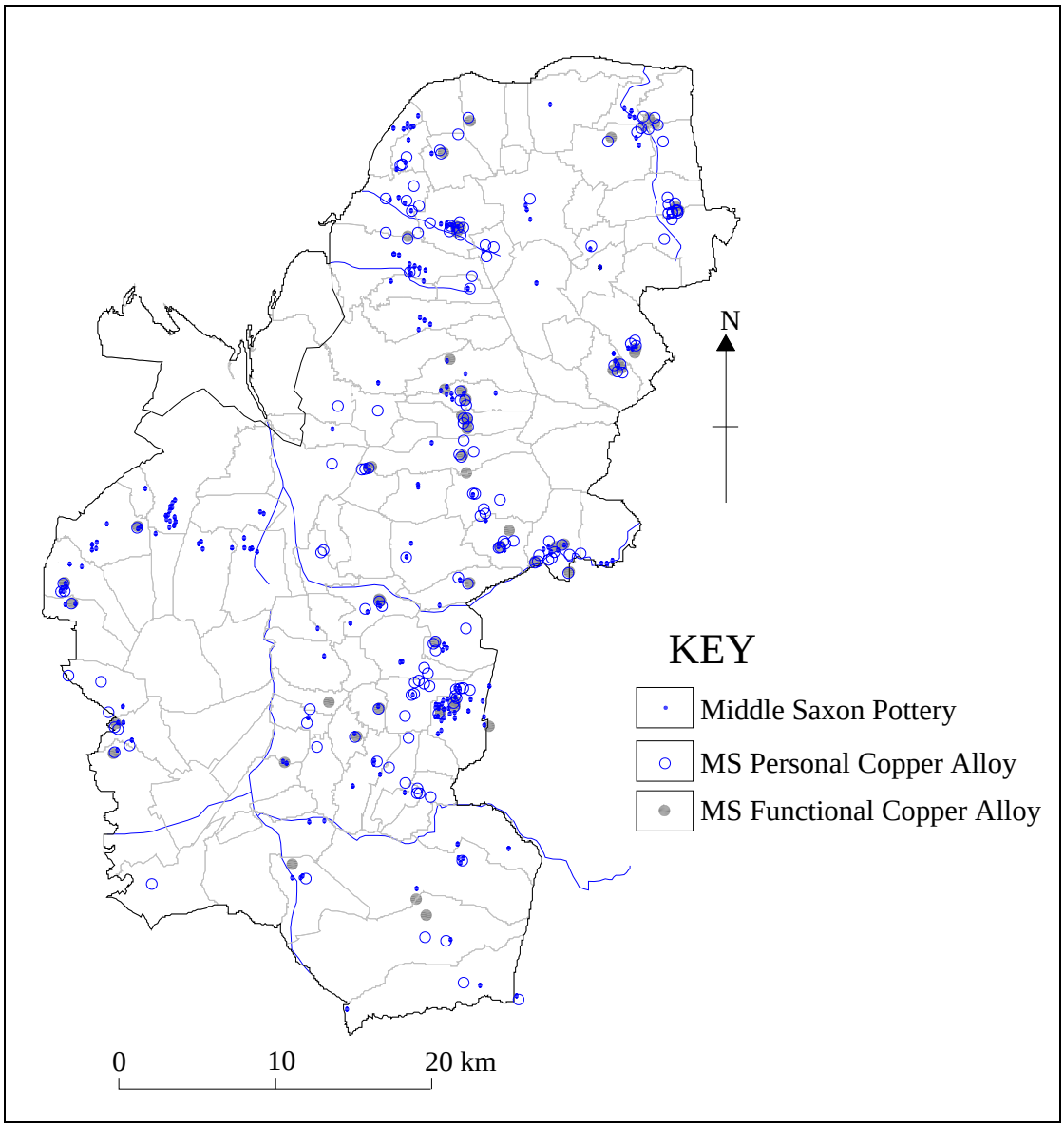



**Figure 18: Findspots of Middle Anglo-Saxon pottery against findspots of functional and personal copper alloy artefacts** (NHER data, see Chapter 4 for definition of functional and personal).

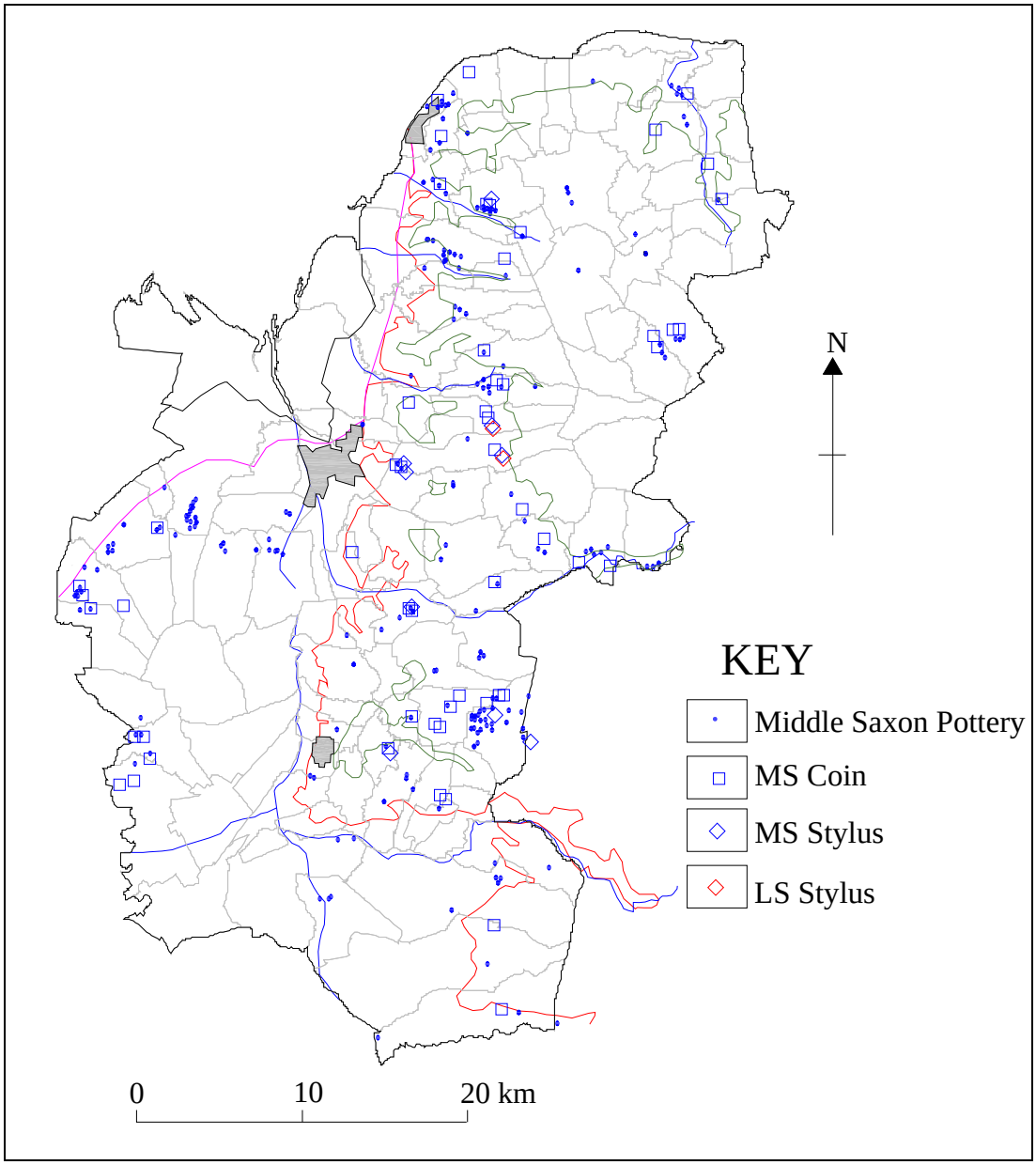



**Figure 19: Findspots of all Middle Anglo-Saxon coinage, Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon styli and Middle Anglo-Saxon pottery** (NHER data).

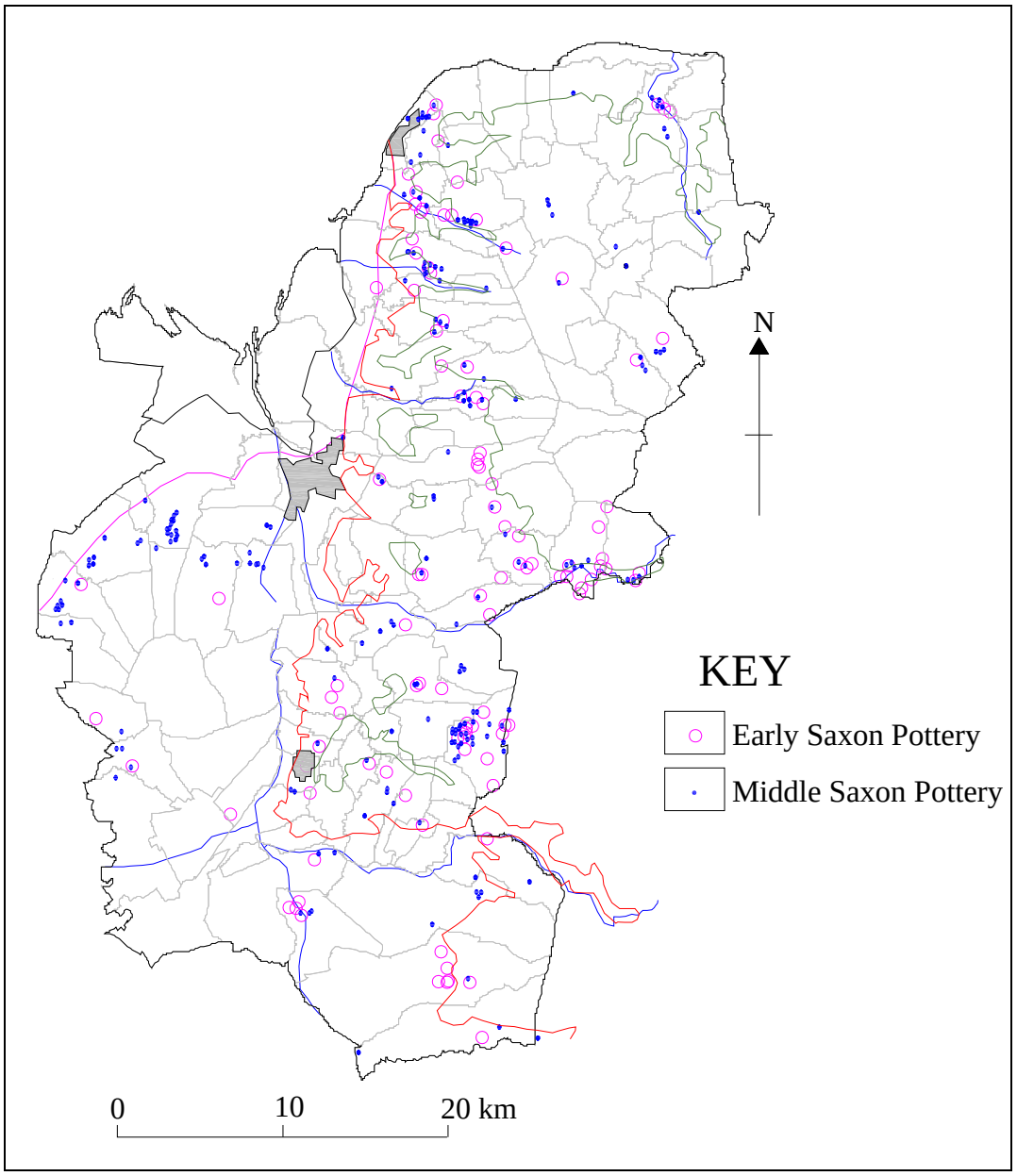



**Figure 20: Findspots of Early Anglo-Saxon and Middle Anglo-Saxon pottery** (NHER data)

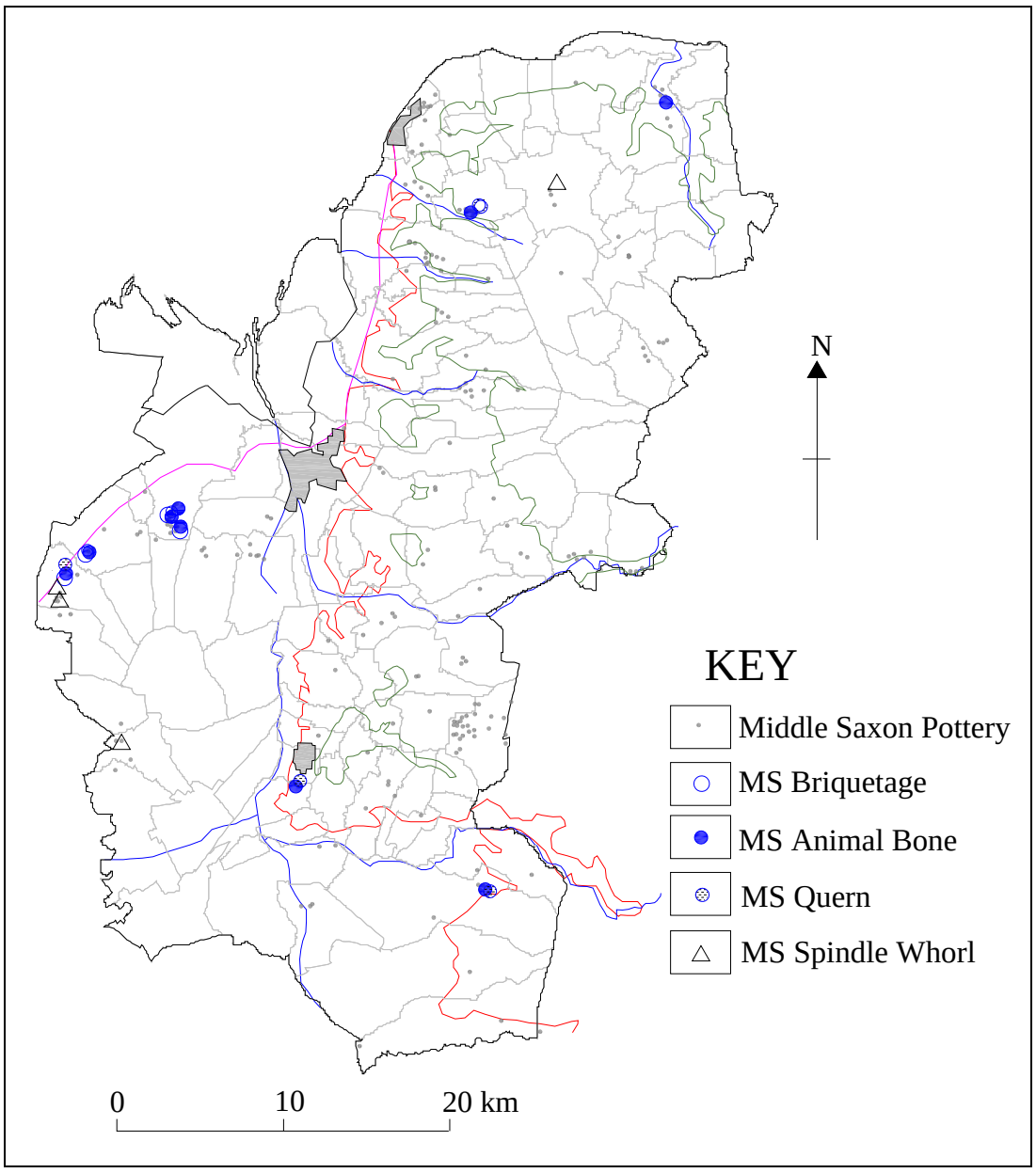



**Figure 21: Findspots of Middle Anglo-Saxon evidence for craft, production and industry activity (Middle Anglo-Saxon pottery findspots also shown)** (NHER data)

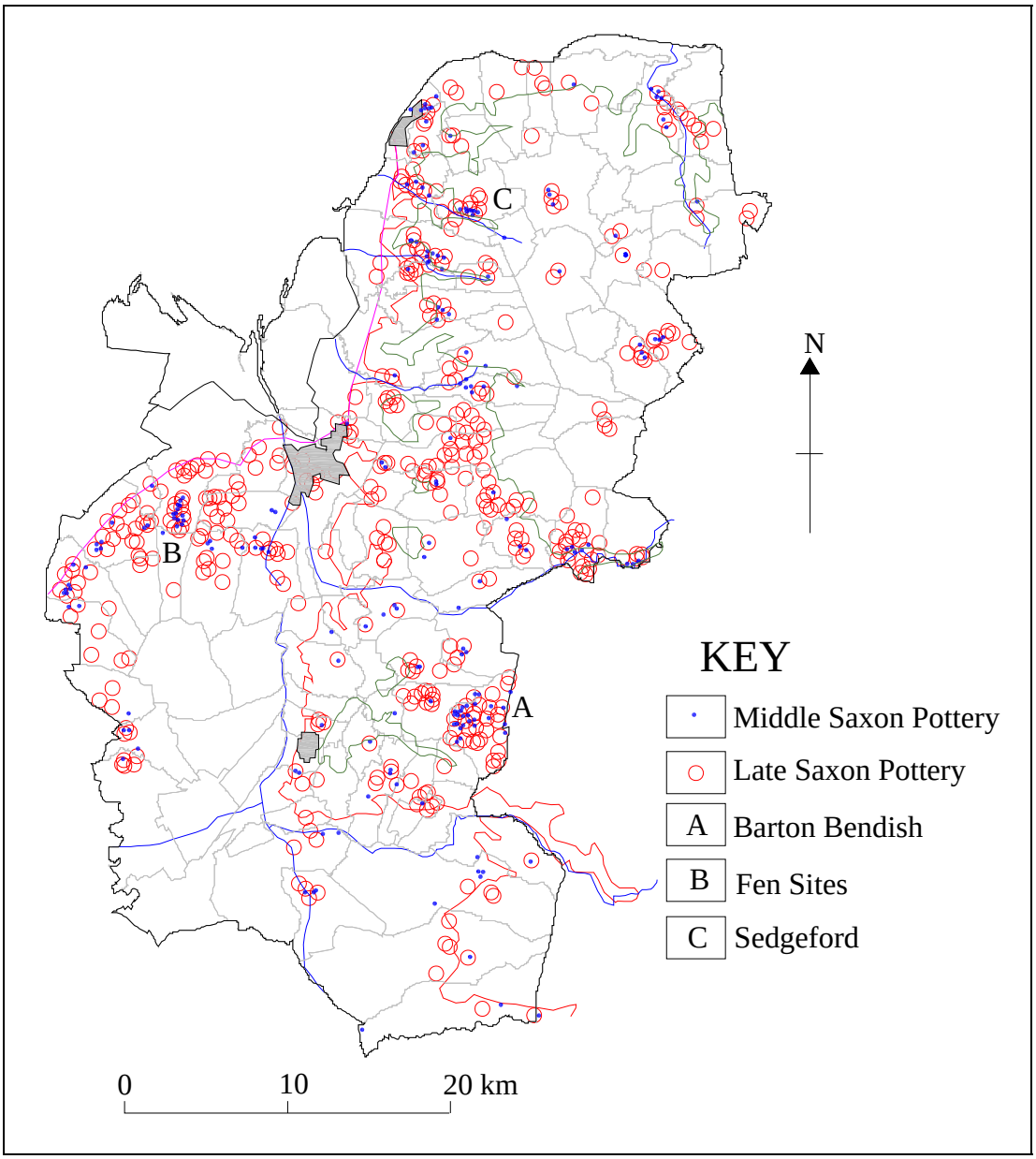



**Figure 22: Findspots of Middle Anglo-Saxon pottery and Late Anglo-Saxon pottery**.
A-C denote sites of systematic survey (NHER data)

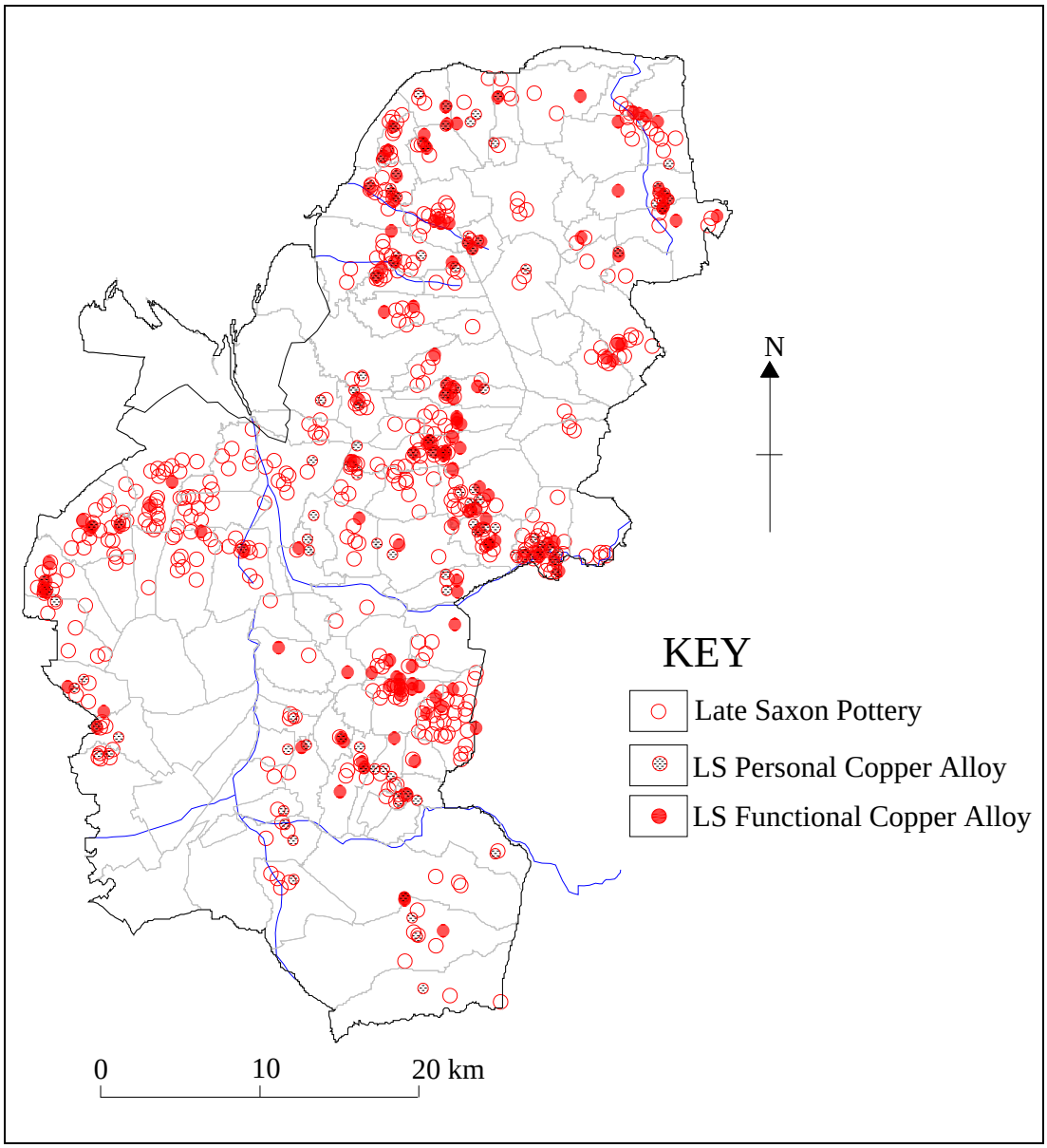



**Figure 23: Findspots of Late Saxon pottery against findspots of functional and personal copper alloy artefacts** (NHER data, see Chapter 4 for definition of functional and personal).

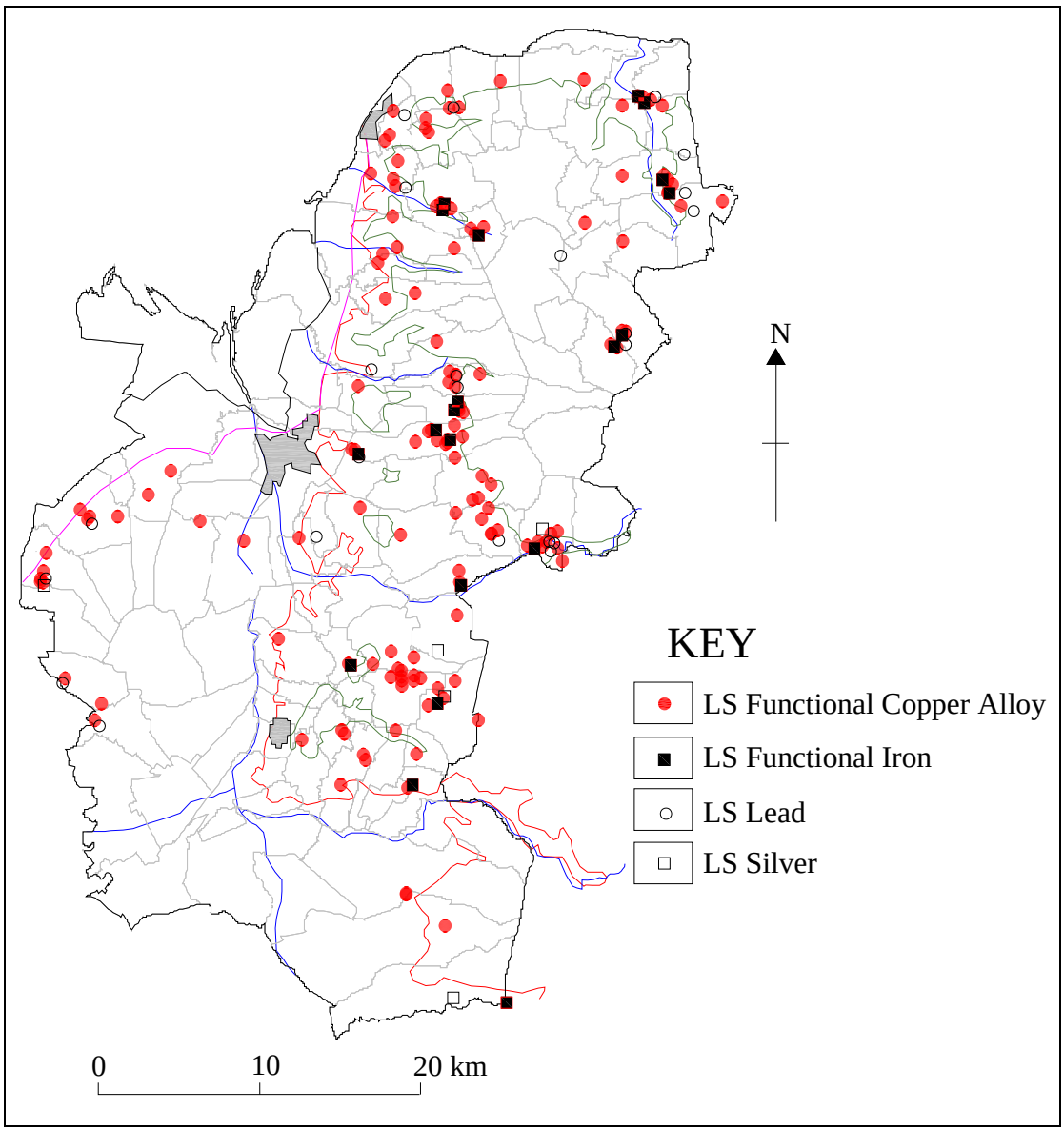



**Figure 24: Findspots of Late Anglo-Saxon functional metalwork** (NHER data)

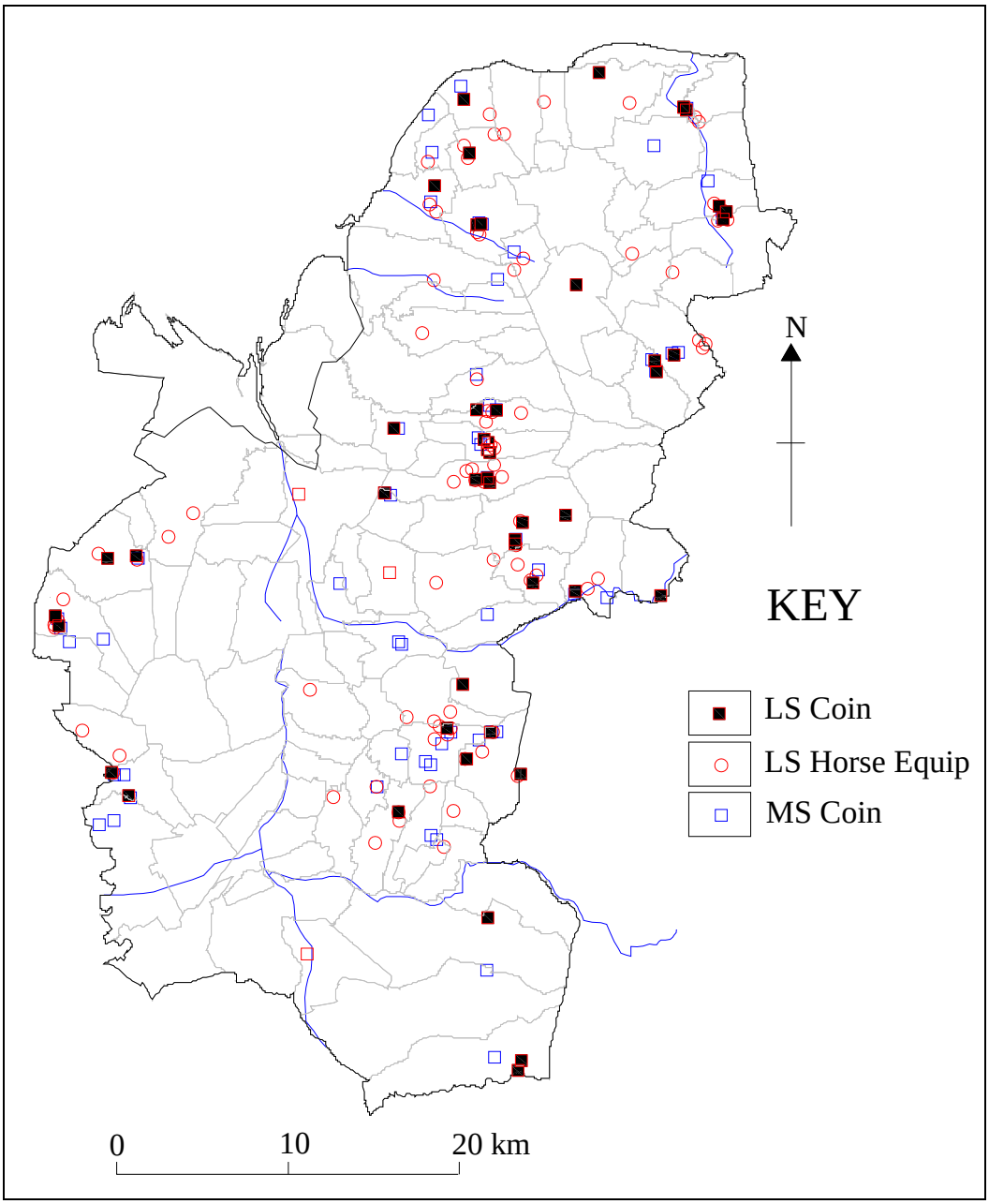



**Figure 25: Findspots of Late Anglo-Saxon Coinage and Horse Equipment against findspots of Middle Anglo-Saxon coinage** (NHER data)

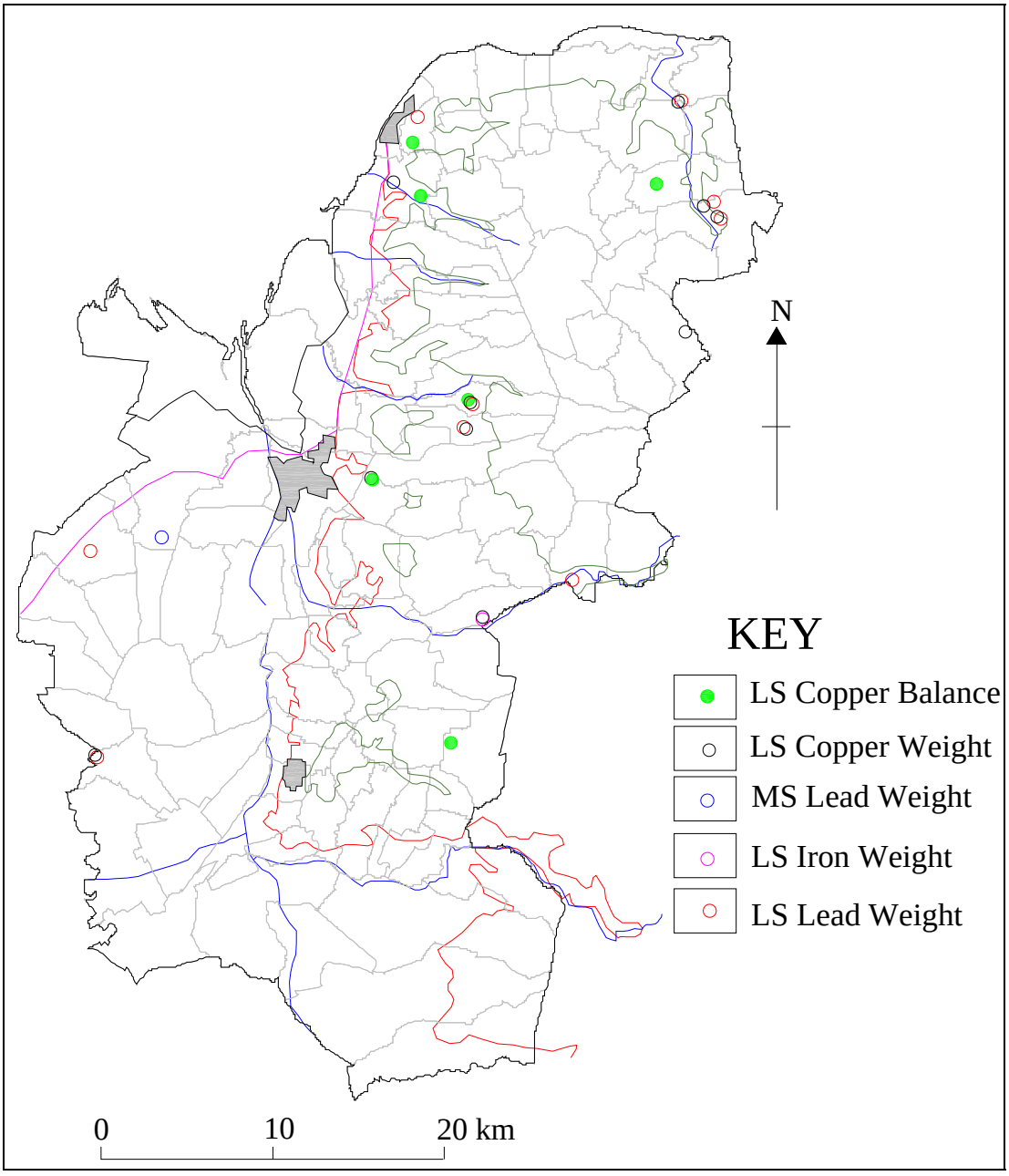



**Figure 26: Findspots of Late Anglo-Saxon Weights and Balances** (NHER data)

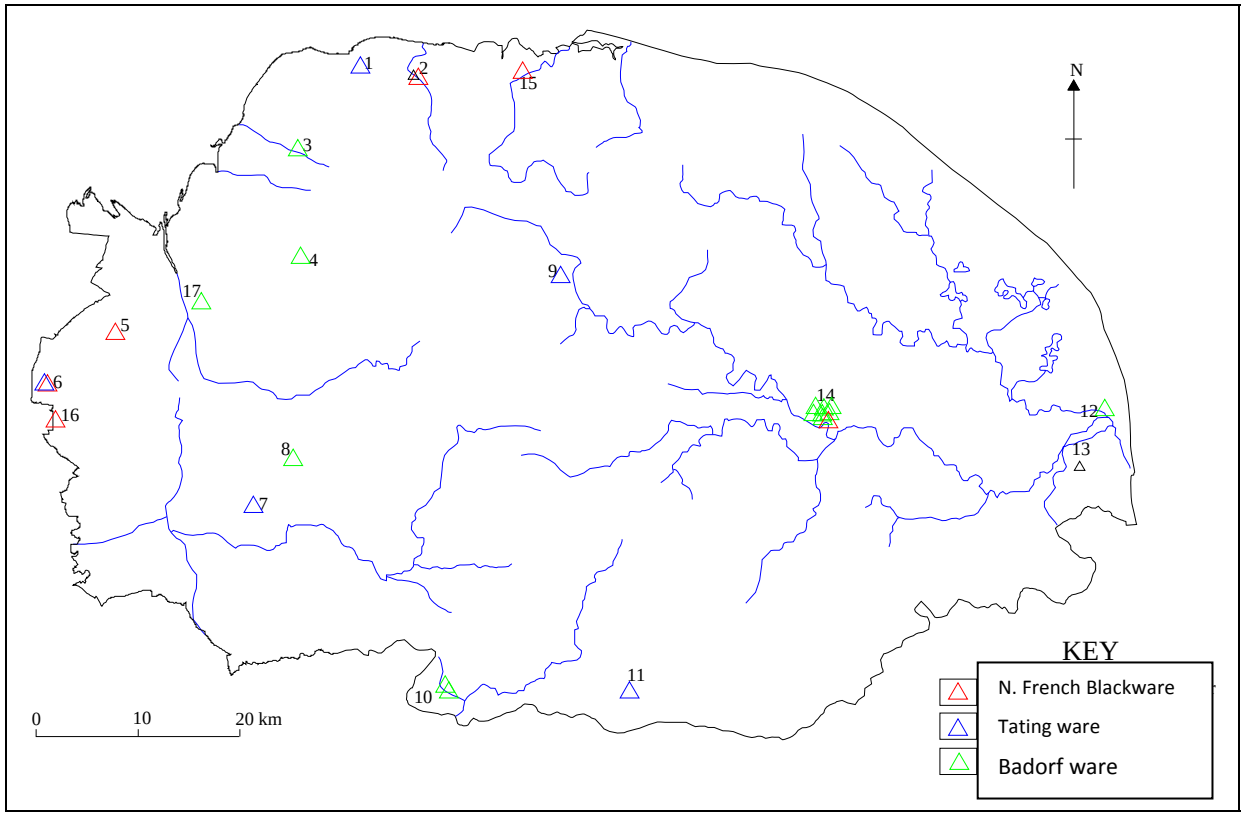



**Figure 27: Middle Anglo-Saxon Continental Wares**, (from NHER data and published reports, when referenced). Sites: 1. Brancaster (Hinchcliffe, 1985), 2. Burnham, 3. Sedgeford (Hodges, 1981), 4. Congham, 5. Terrington St. Clements (Crowson, 2005), 6. West Walton (Crowson, 2005), 7. West Dereham, 8. Barton Bendish (Rogerson et al. 1997), 9. North Elmham (Wade-Martins, 1980b), 10. Redcastle Furze, Thetford (Andrews, 1995), 11. Quidenham, 12. Caistor-On-Sea (Darling and Gurney, 1993) , 13. Burgh Castle (Johnson, 1983), 14. Norwich, 15. Wells-next-the-sea, 16.Outwell, 17. Nr. Kings Lynn.

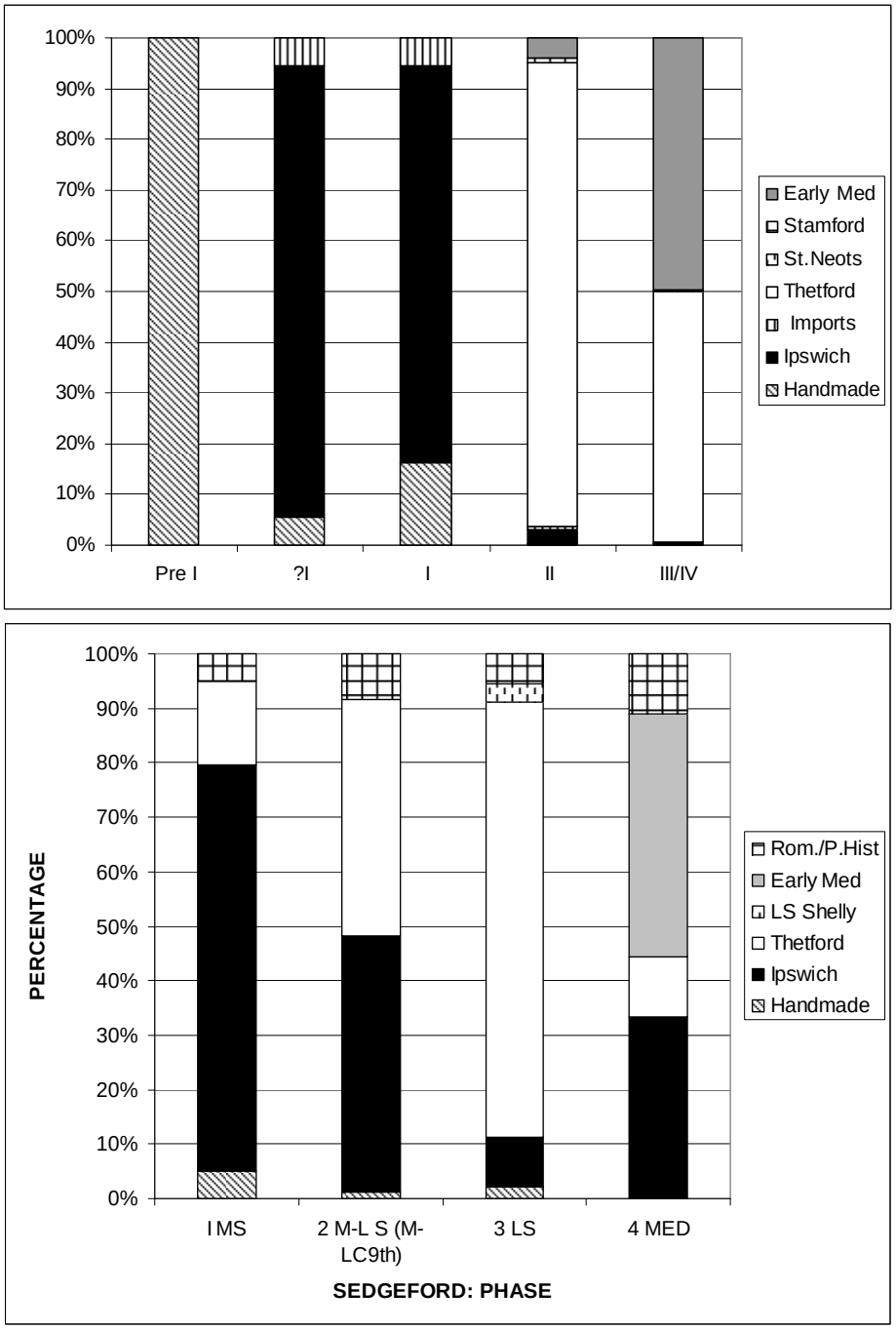



**Figure 28: Percentage of pottery types by attributed phase at North Elmham (top) and Sedgeford (bottom).**

North Elmham phases are I: Middle Anglo-Saxon, II: Late Ninth to Tenth century, III: Eleventh century, IV: Medieval (data adapted after Wade-Martins, 1980b). Sedgeford data is unpublished (Davies, forthcoming).

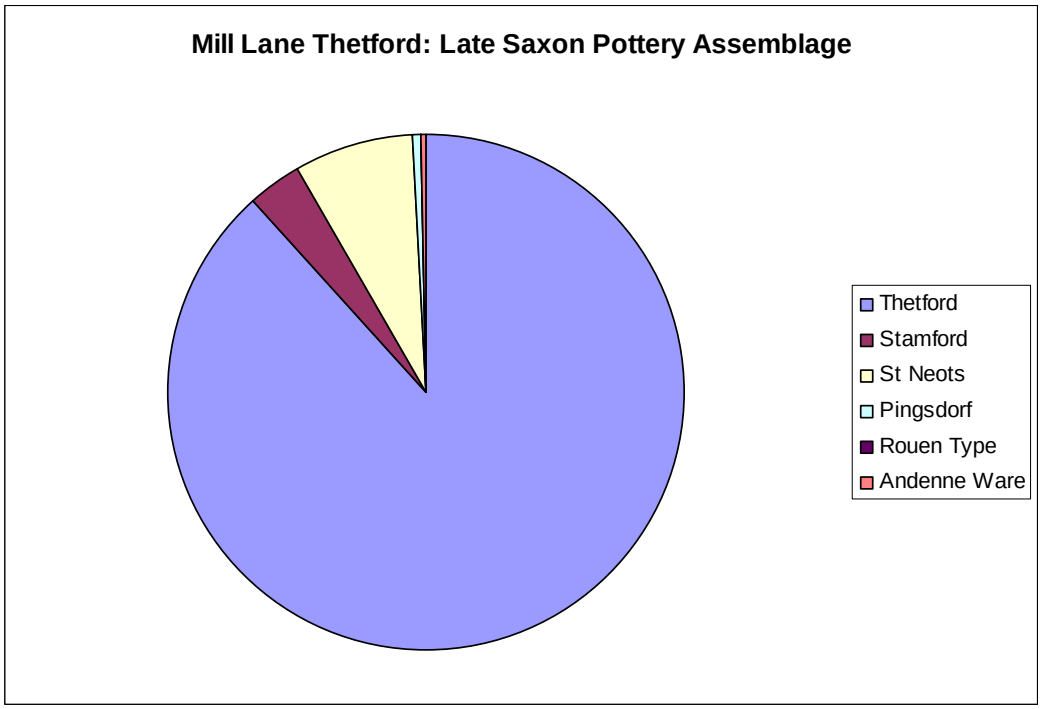



**Figure 29: Standard Late Anglo-Saxon assemblage of Thetford ware, regional and continental imports** (data adapted after Wallis, 2004).

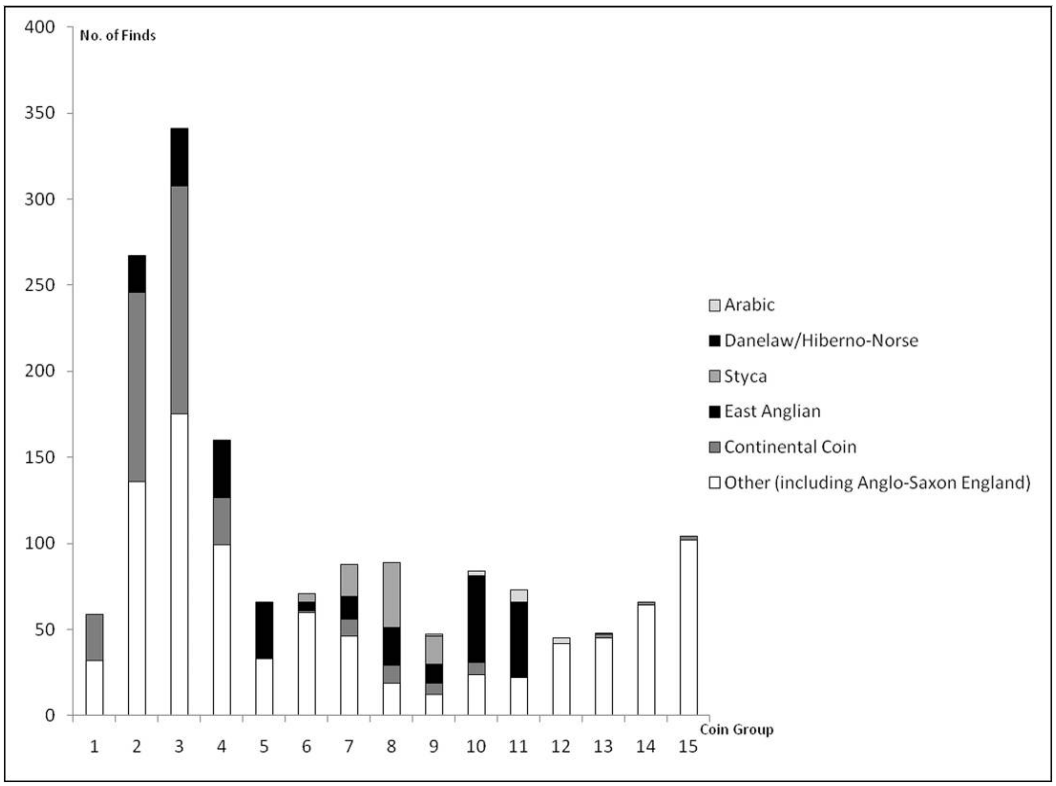



**Figure 30: Number of coins by date group and source for Norfolk**. Coin group dates (adapted after Naylor 2007, new groups in italics): **1** pre-680; **2** c 680–710; **3** c710–40; **4** c 740–60; **5** c 760–90; **6** c 790–810; **7** 810–40; **8** c 840–55; **9** 855-70**; *10*** *870–900; **11*** *900–30; **12*** *930-60; **13*** *960-90; **14*** *990-1020**; 15*** *1020-50* (data NHER and Fitzwilliam Museum Online Corpus).

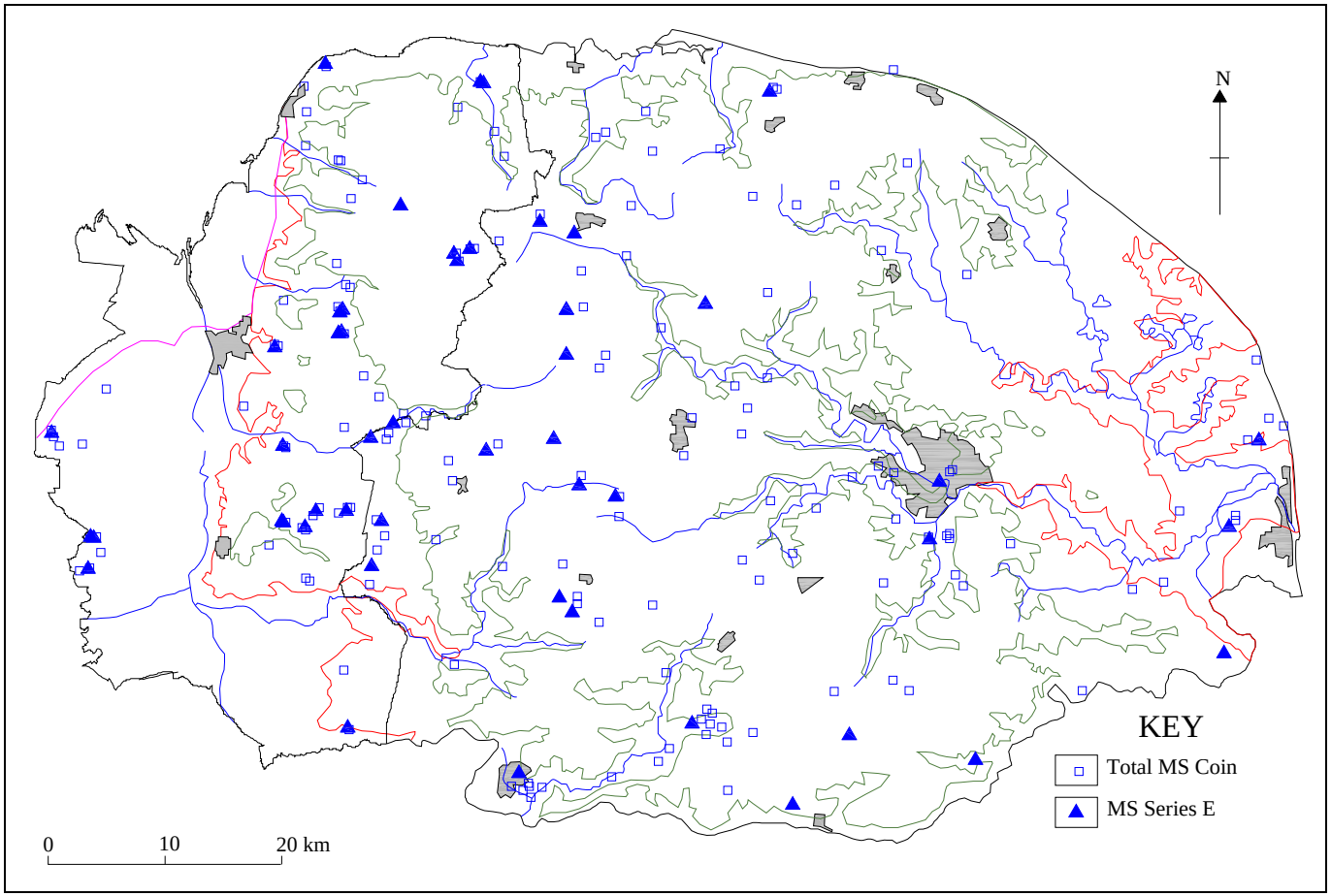



**Figure 31: Total findspots of Middle Anglo-Saxon coins in Norfolk against Early Continental Series E sceattas** (data NHER and Fitzwilliam Museum Online Corpus).

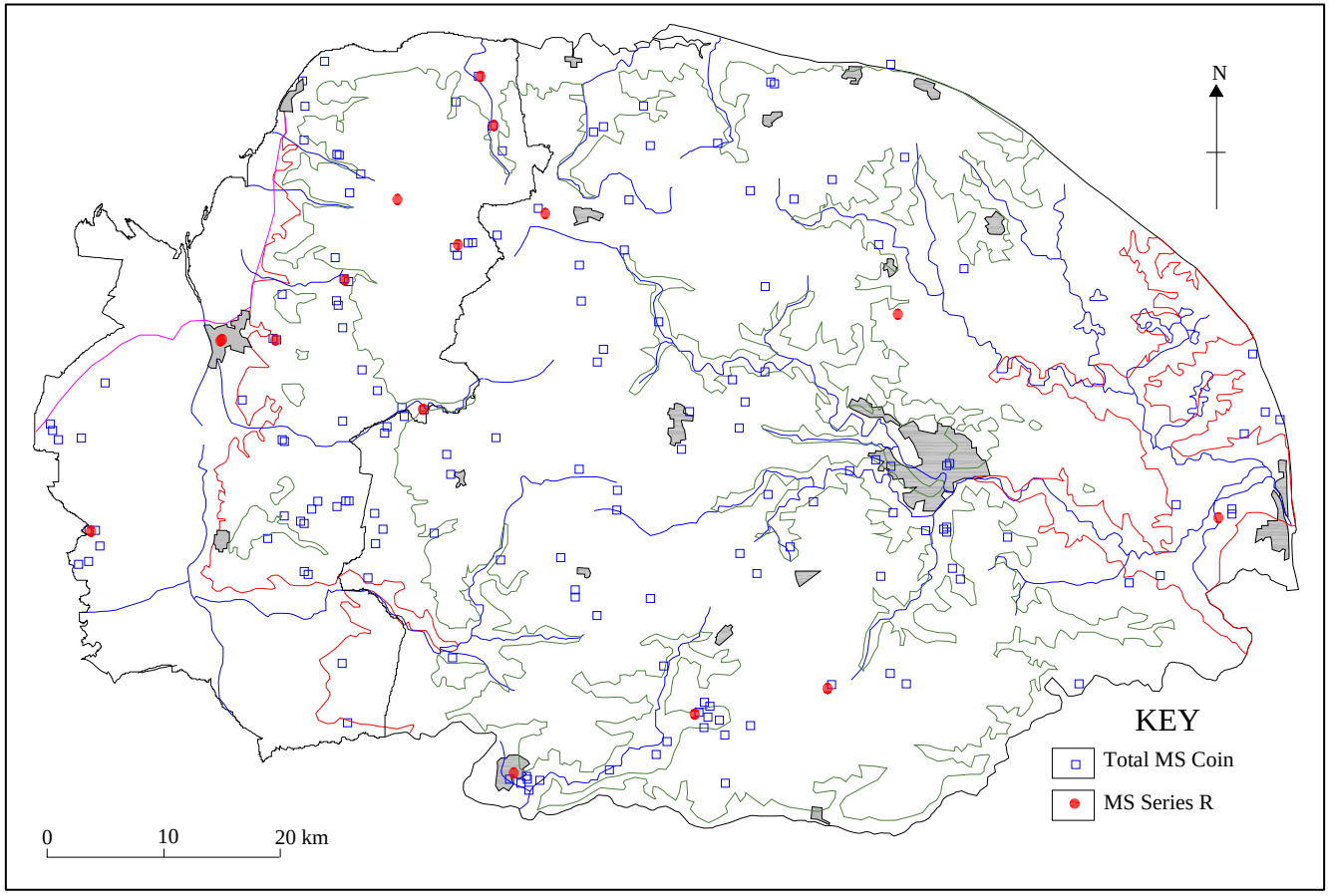



**Figure 32: Total findspots of Middle Anglo-Saxon coins in Norfolk against Series R sceattas** (data NHER and Fitzwilliam Museum Online Corpus).

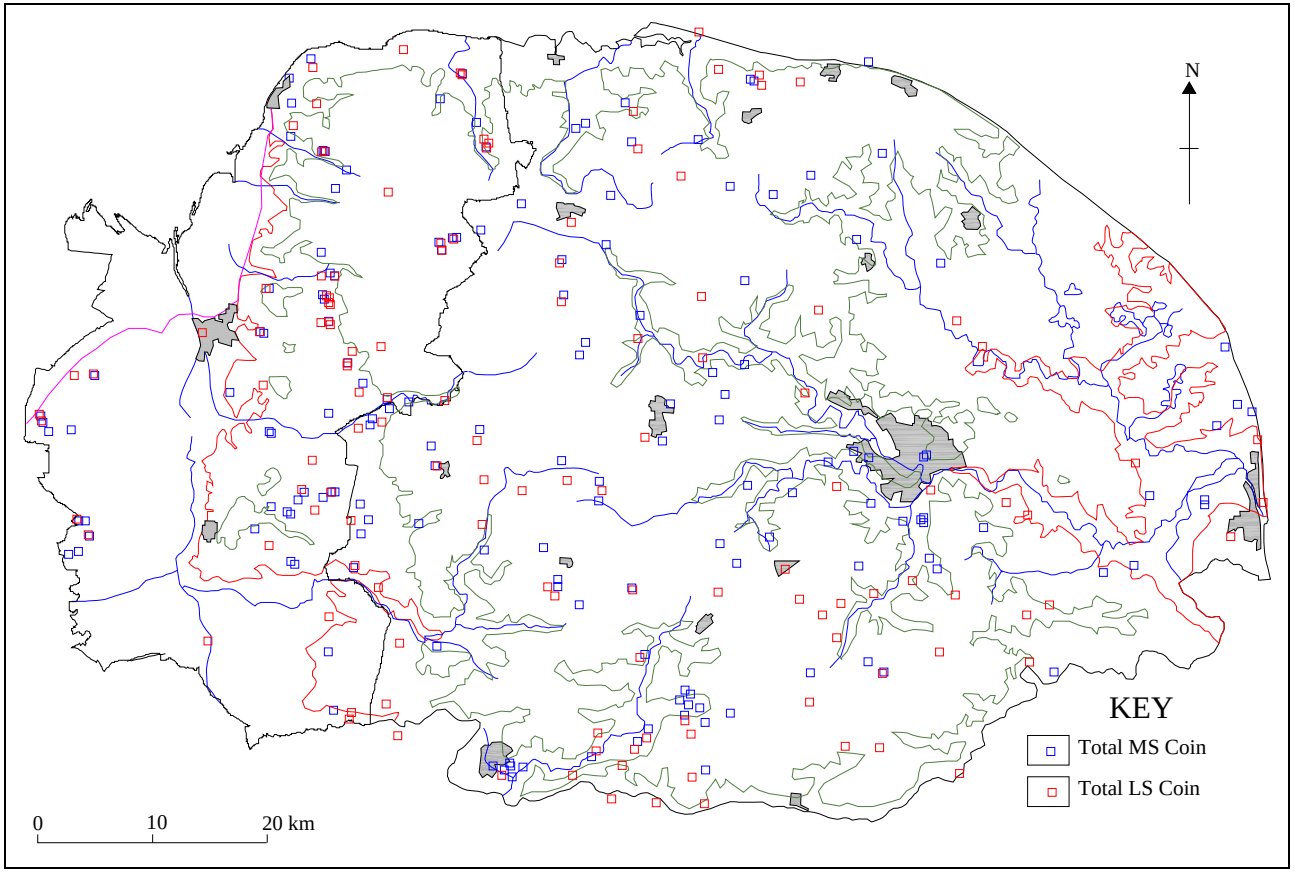



**Figure 33: Total findspots of Middle Anglo-Saxon coins in Norfolk against Late Anglo-Saxon coins** (data NHER and Fitzwilliam Museum Online Corpus).

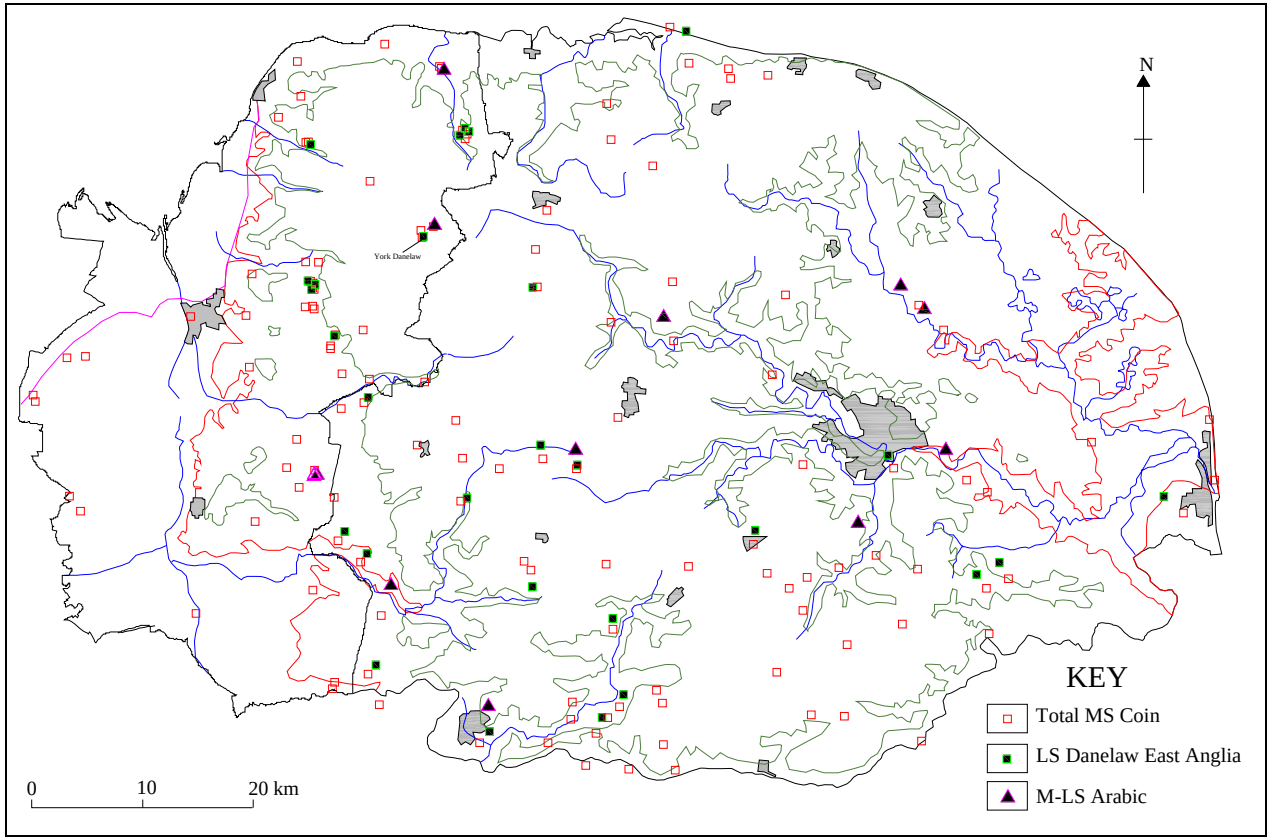



**Figure 34: Total findspots of Late Anglo-Saxon coins in Norfolk against East Anglia Danelaw minted and Mid-Late Anglo-Saxon period Arabic coins** (data NHER and Fitzwilliam Museum Online Corpus).

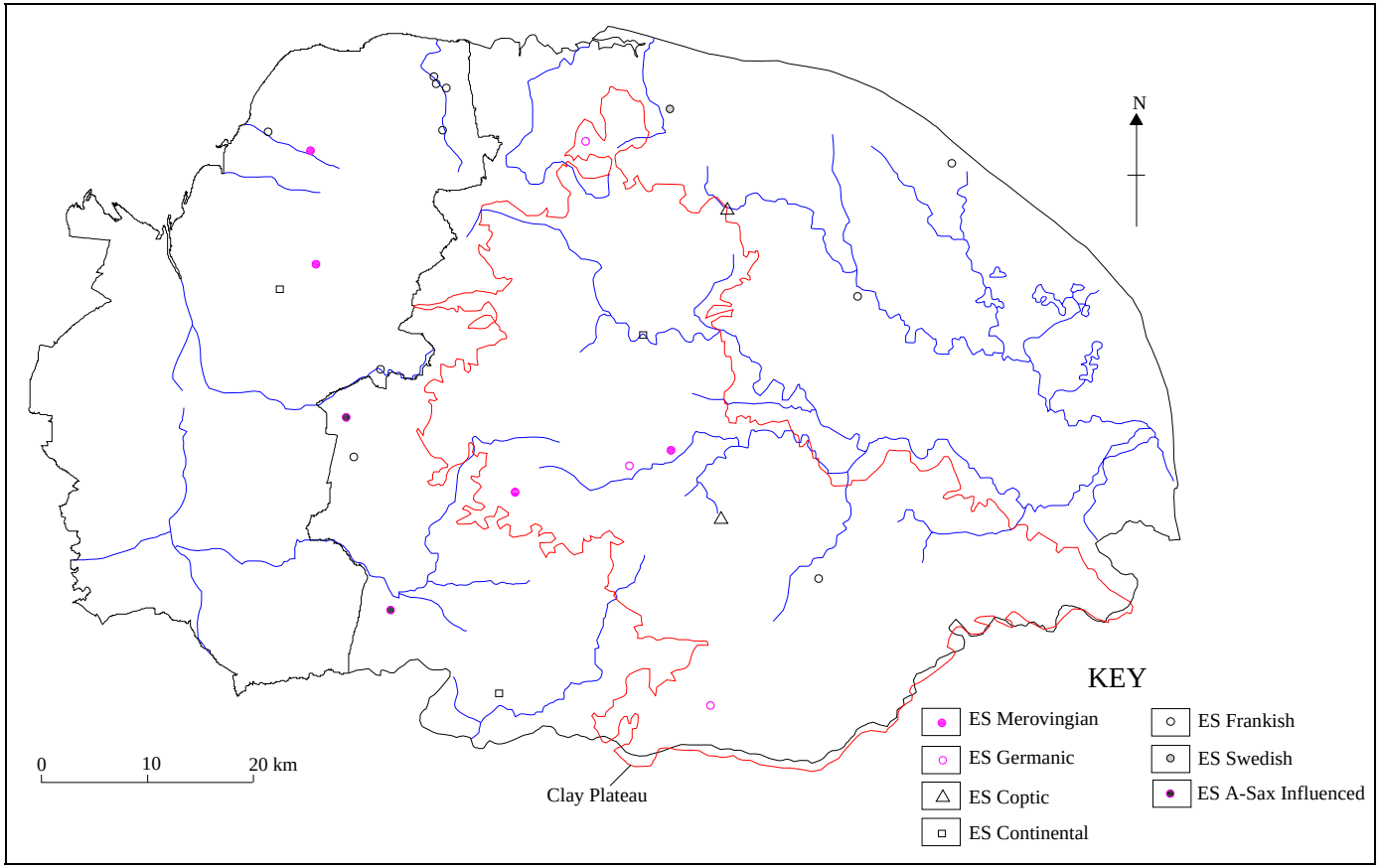



**Figure 35: Findspots of Early Anglo-Saxon imported Metalwork** (data NHER and Norfolk Archaeology journal).

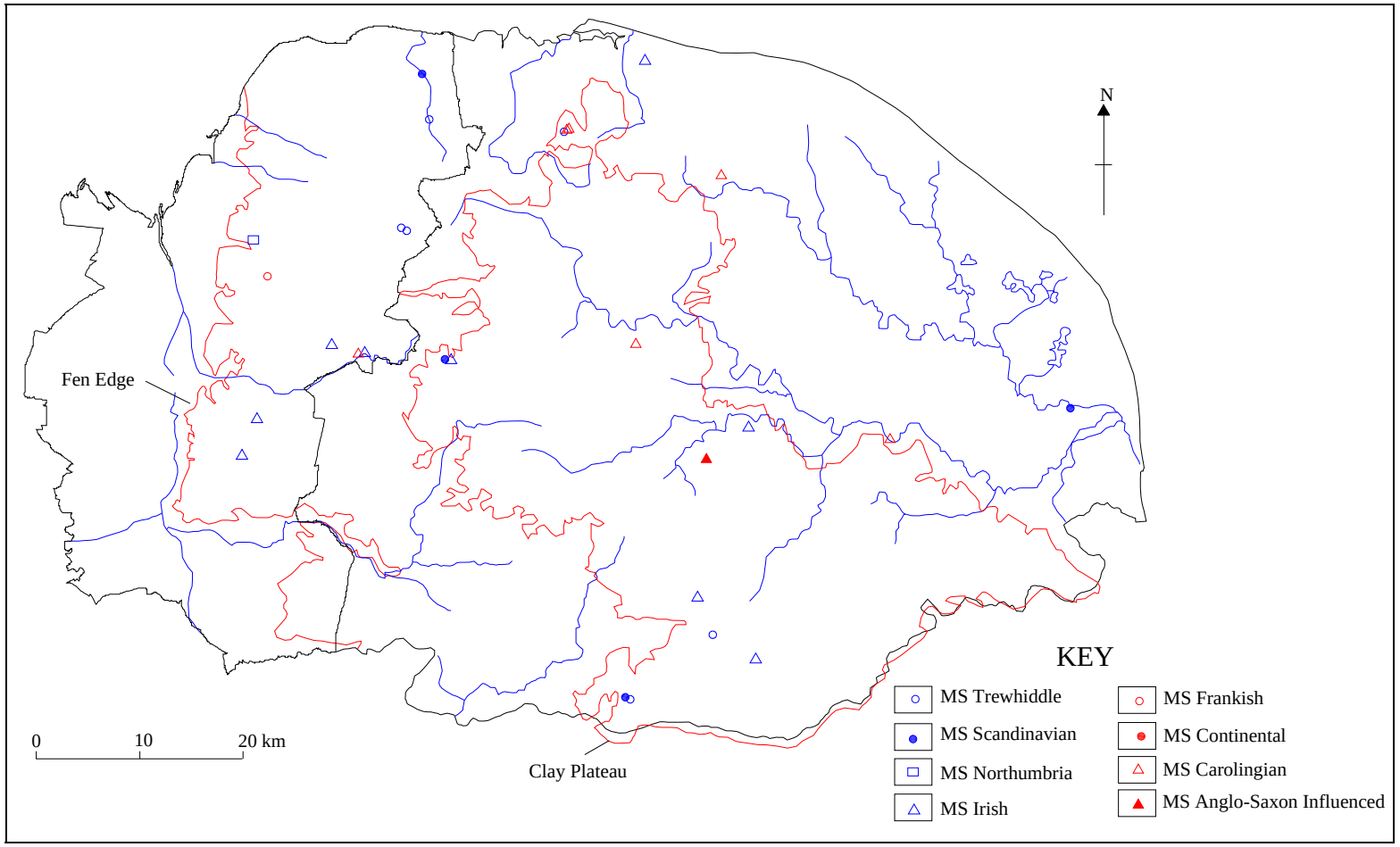



**Figure 36: Findspots of Middle Anglo-Saxon imported Metalwork** (data NHER and Norfolk Archaeology journal).

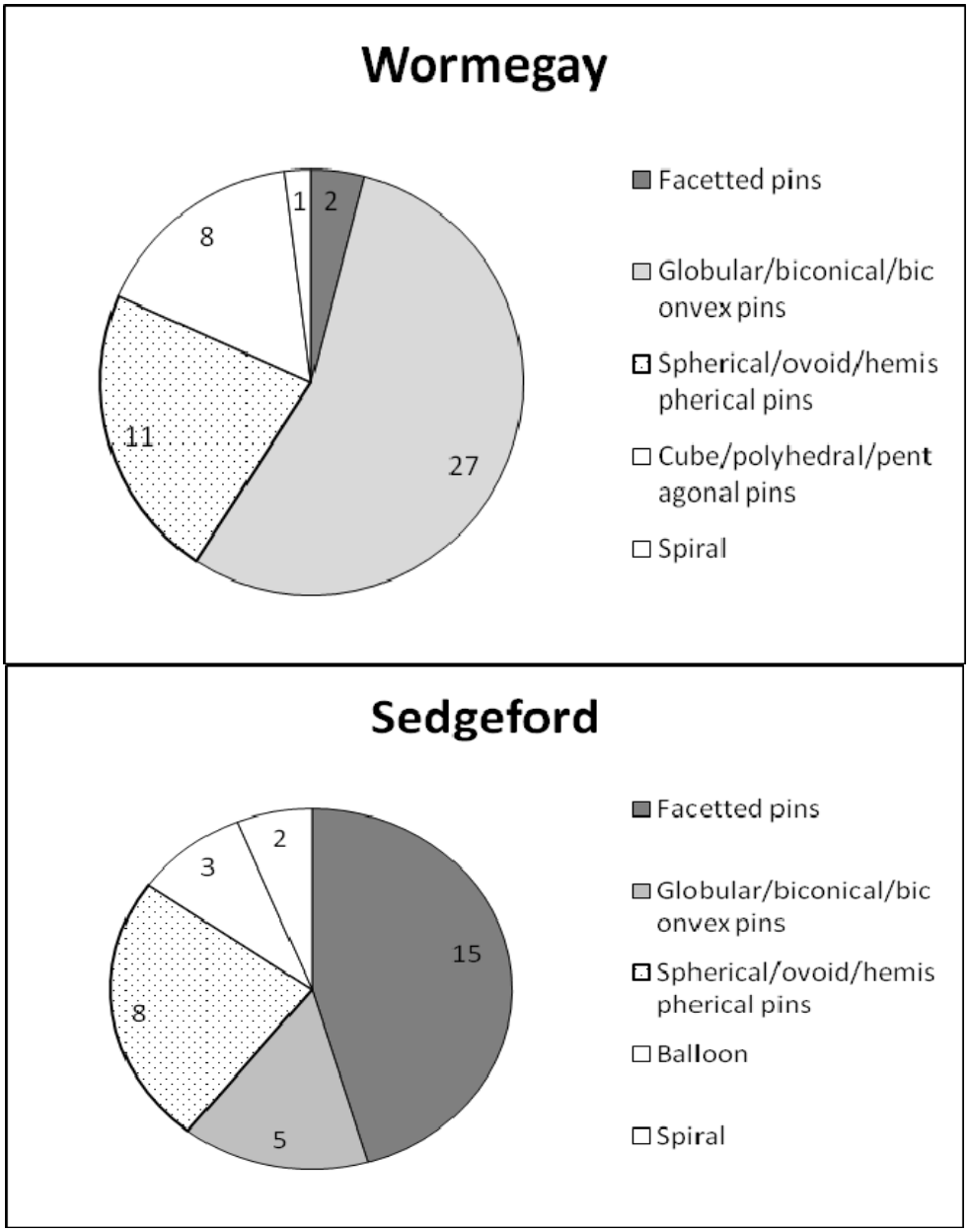



**Figure 37: Proportion and count (numbers) of Middle Anglo-Saxon pin types at Wormegay and Sedgeford (unpublished data after Davies and Payne, forthcoming).**

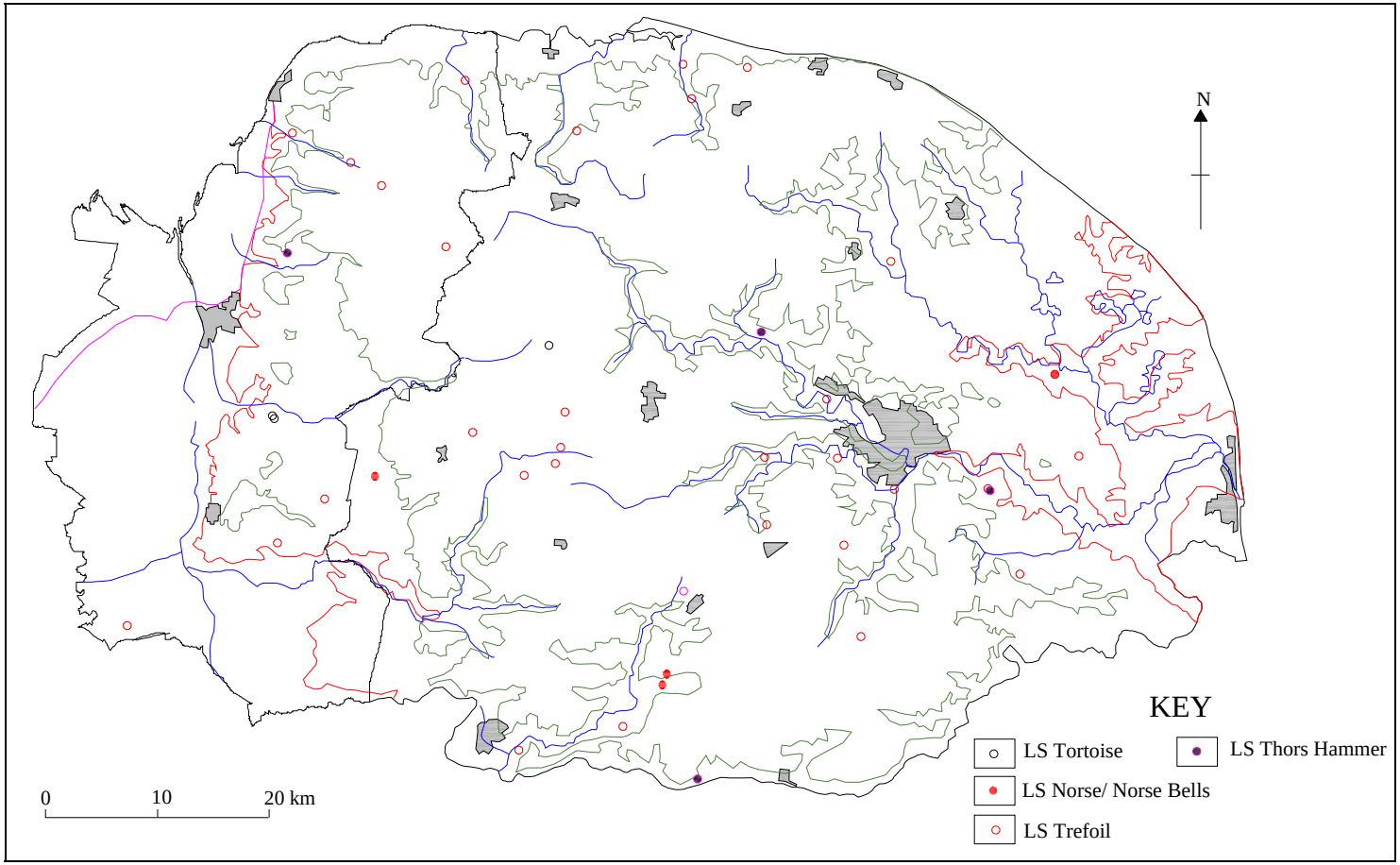



**Figure 38: Findspots of Tortoise Brooches, Norse Bells, Thor's Hammer Pendants and Scandinavian-Style Trefoil Brooches** (data NHER and after Pestell, 2005).

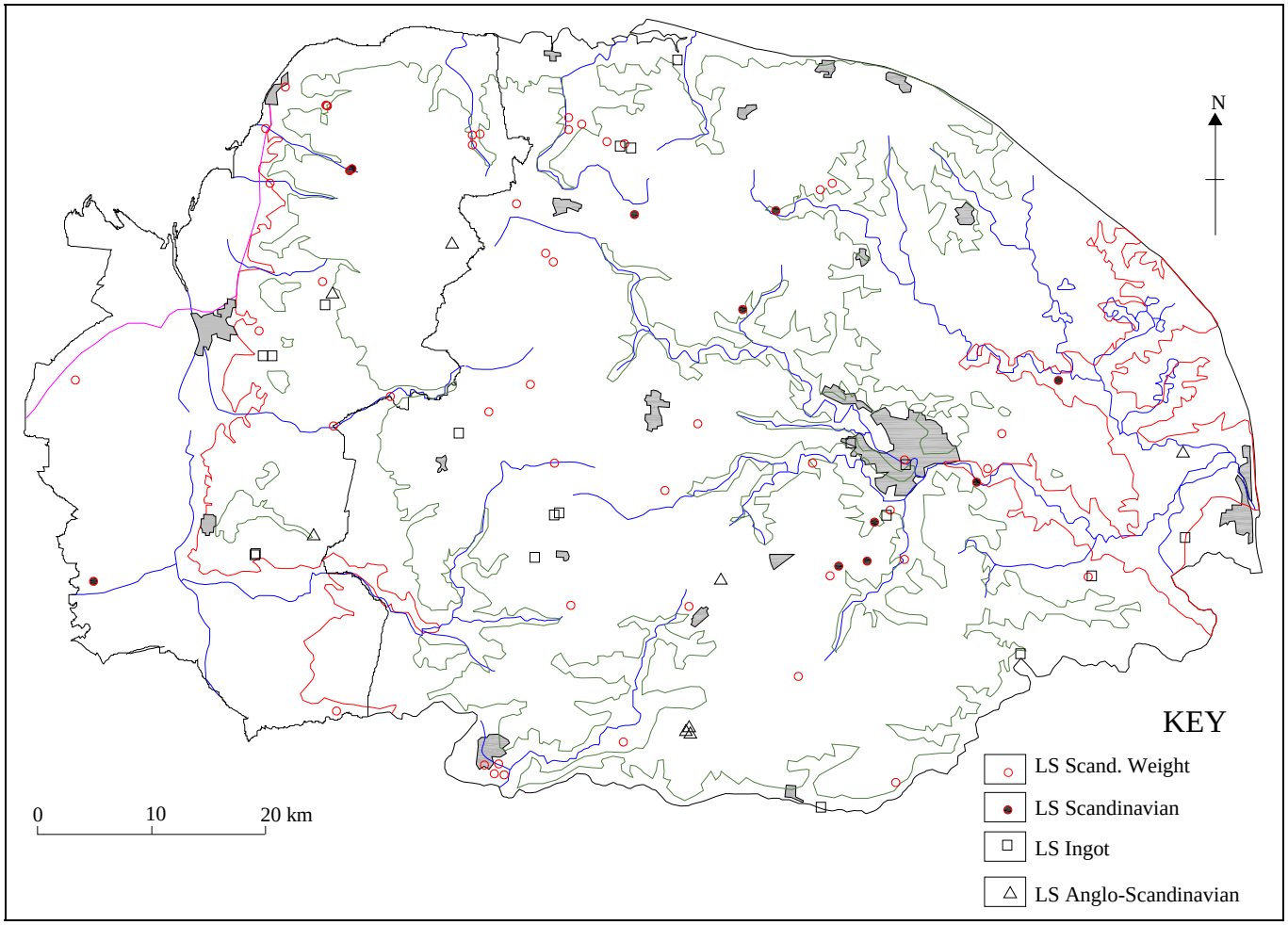



**Figure 39: Findspots of Anglo-Scandinavian metalwork, Scandinavian metalwork, Ingots and Scandinavian weights** (data NHER and after Pestell, 2005).

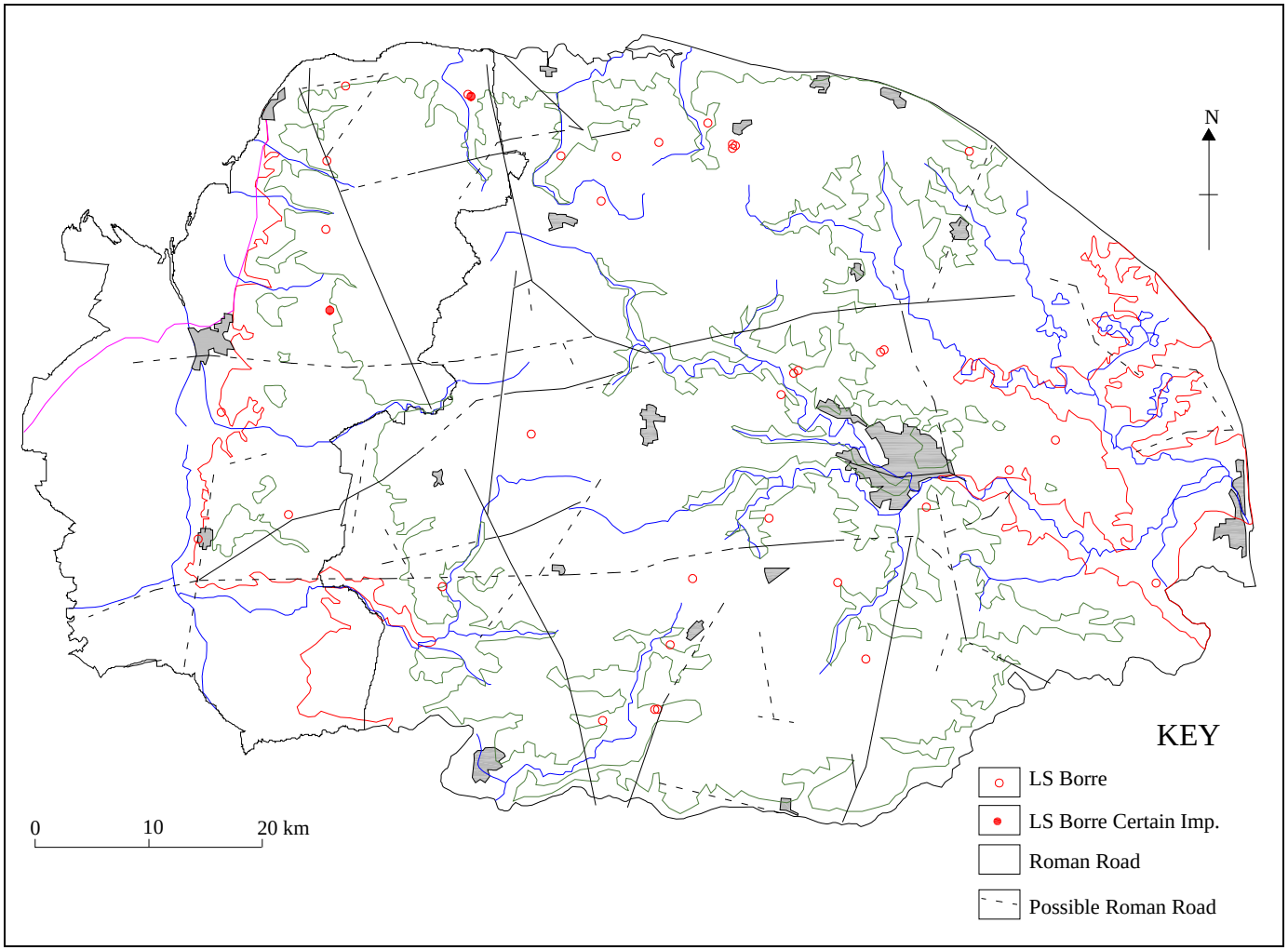



**Figure 40: Findspots of Late Anglo-Saxon Borre metalwork** (data NHER and after Pestell, 2005).

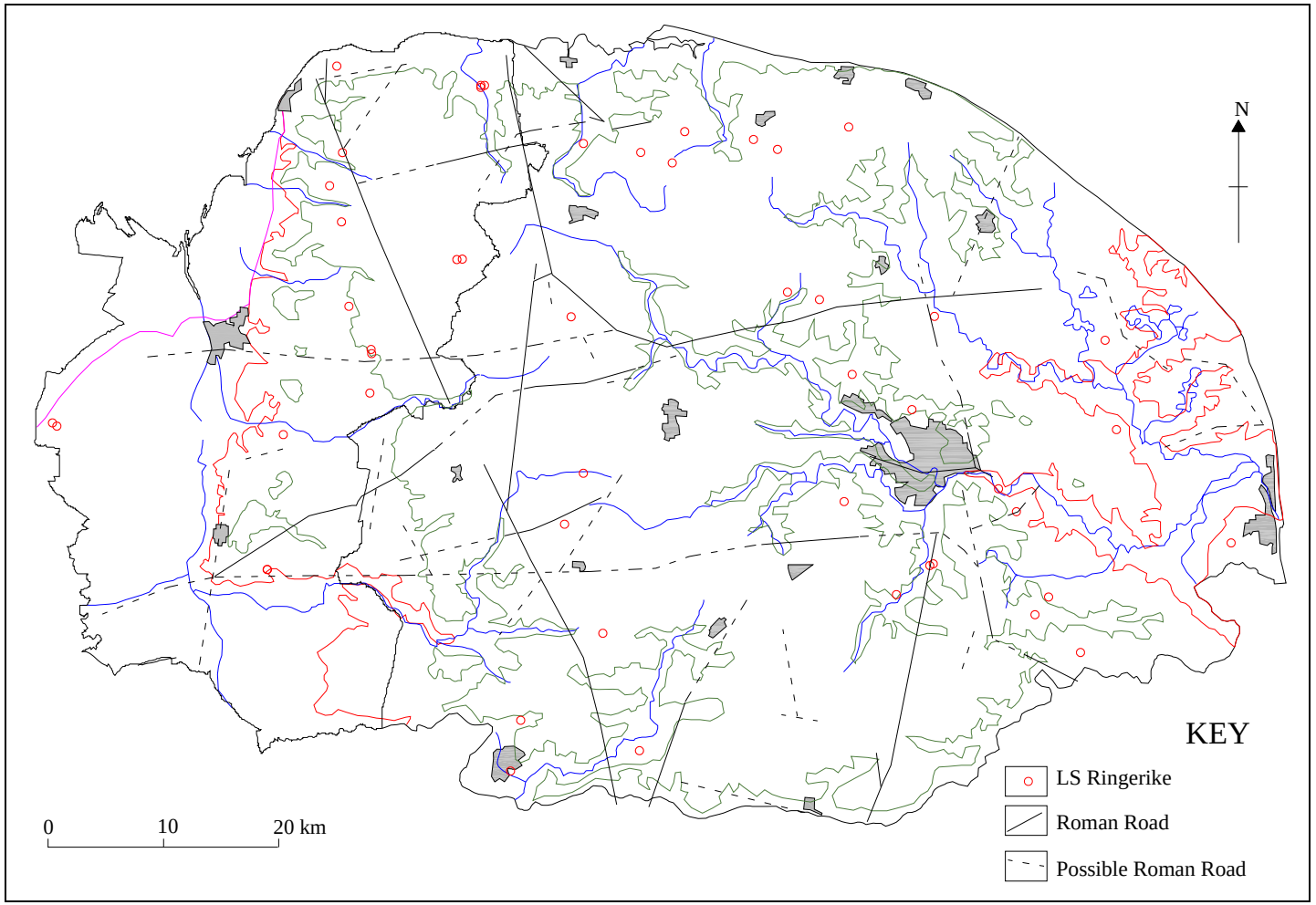



**Figure 41: Findspots of Late Anglo-Saxon Ringerike metalwork** (data NHER and after Pestell, 2005).

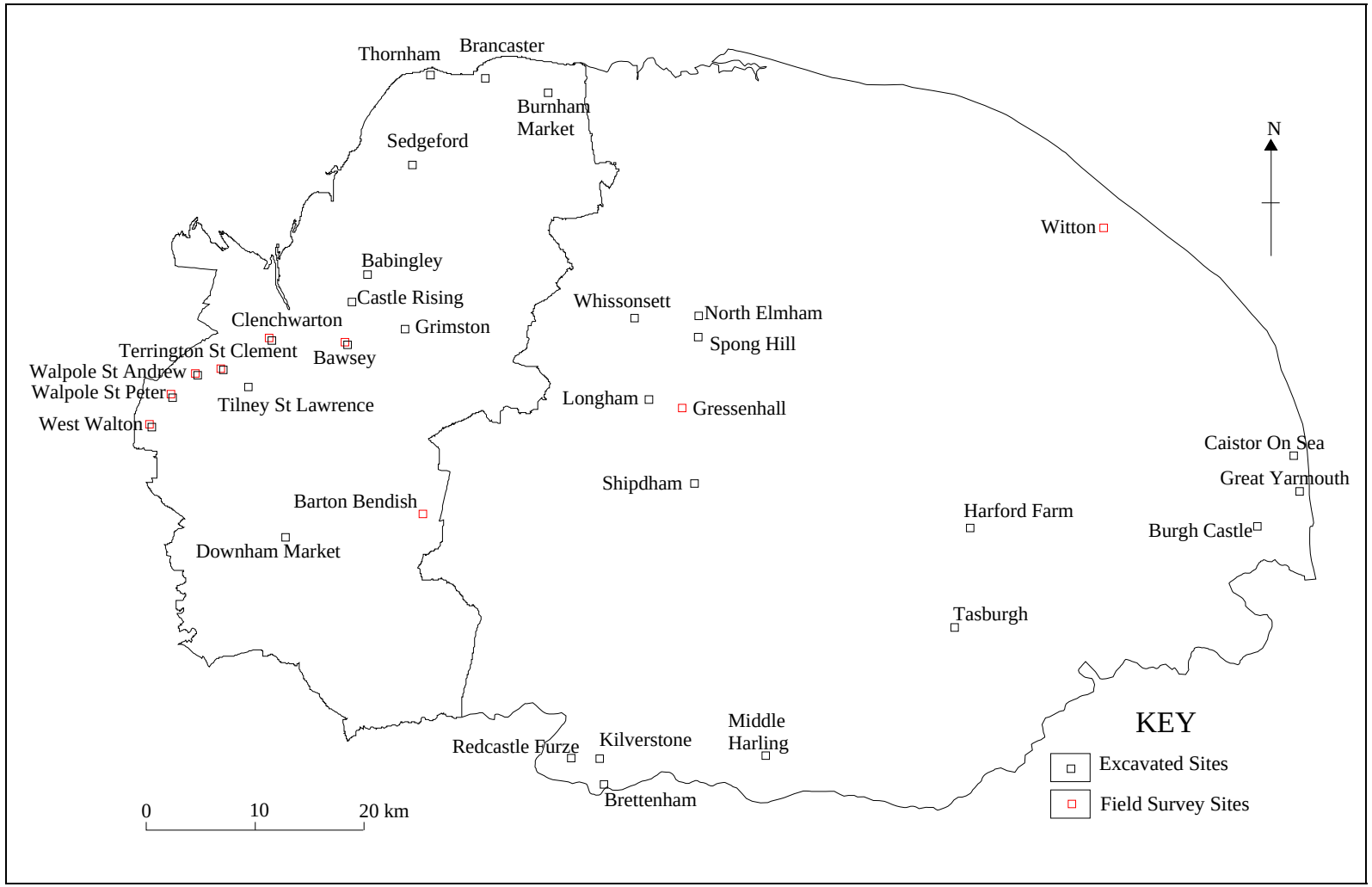



**Figure 42: Excavated and Surveyed Anglo-Saxon rural settlements in Norfolk** (showing West Norfolk study area) (data NHER).

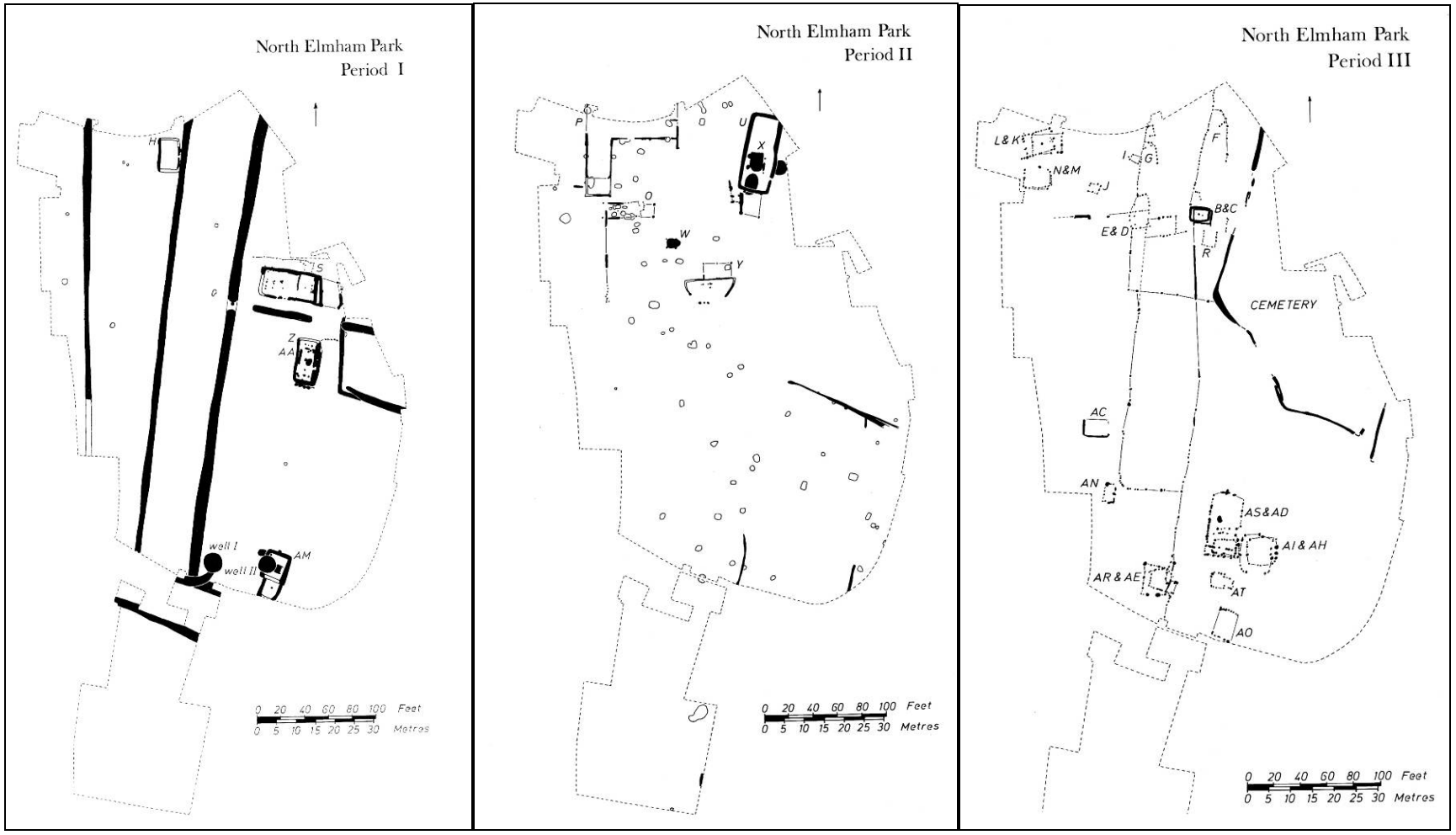



**Figure 43: Excavated settlement sequence at North Elmham (after Wade-Martins, 1980b). Periods: I: Middle Anglo-Saxon, II: Late Ninth to Tenth century, III: Eleventh century, IV: Medieval.**

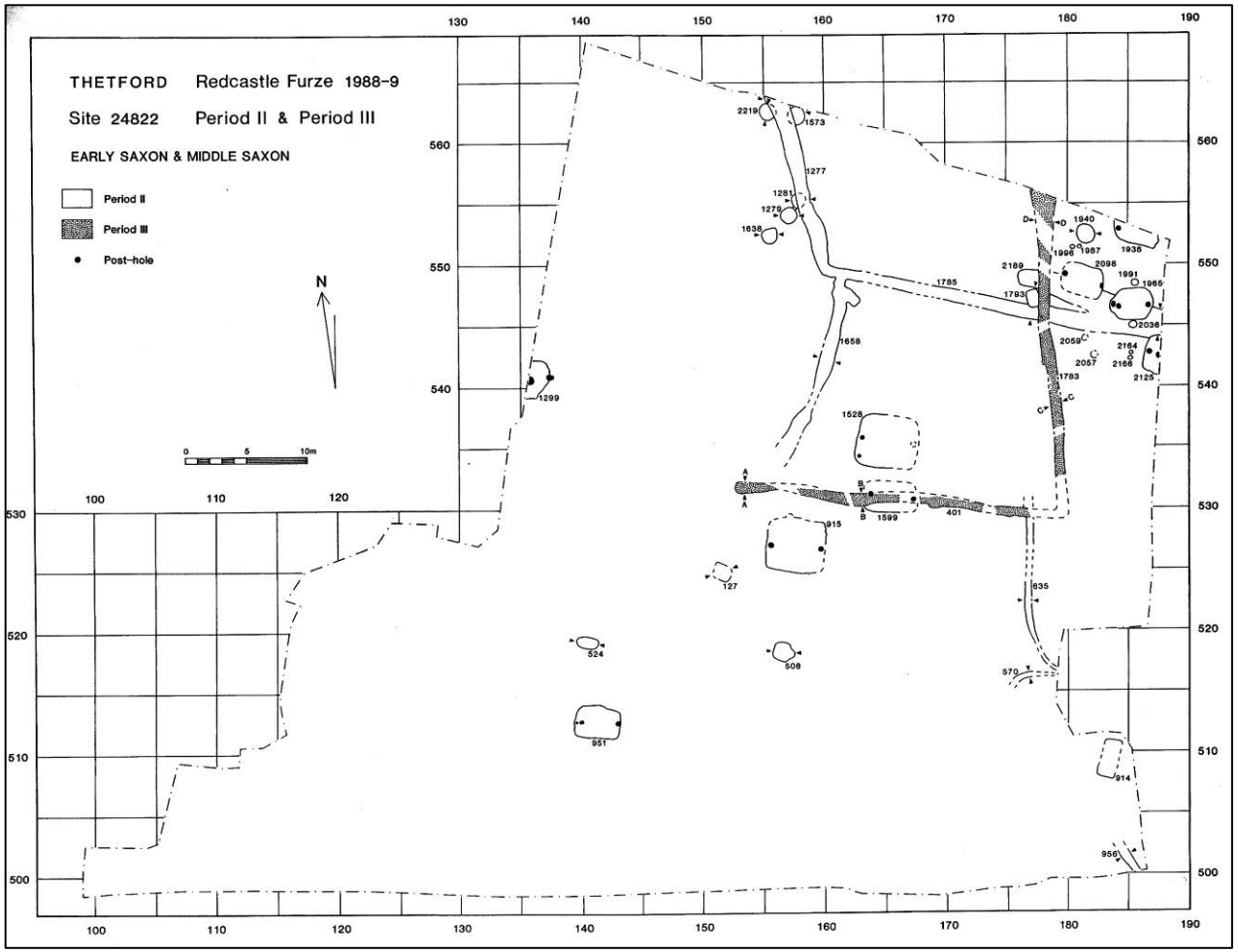



**Figure 44: Dynamic Settlement Sequence at Redcastle Furze, Thetford (Early-Mid Anglo-Saxon) (after Andrews, 1995).**


**Figure 45: Dynamic Settlement Sequence at Redcastle Furze, Thetford (Late Anglo-Saxon) (after Andrews, 1995).**

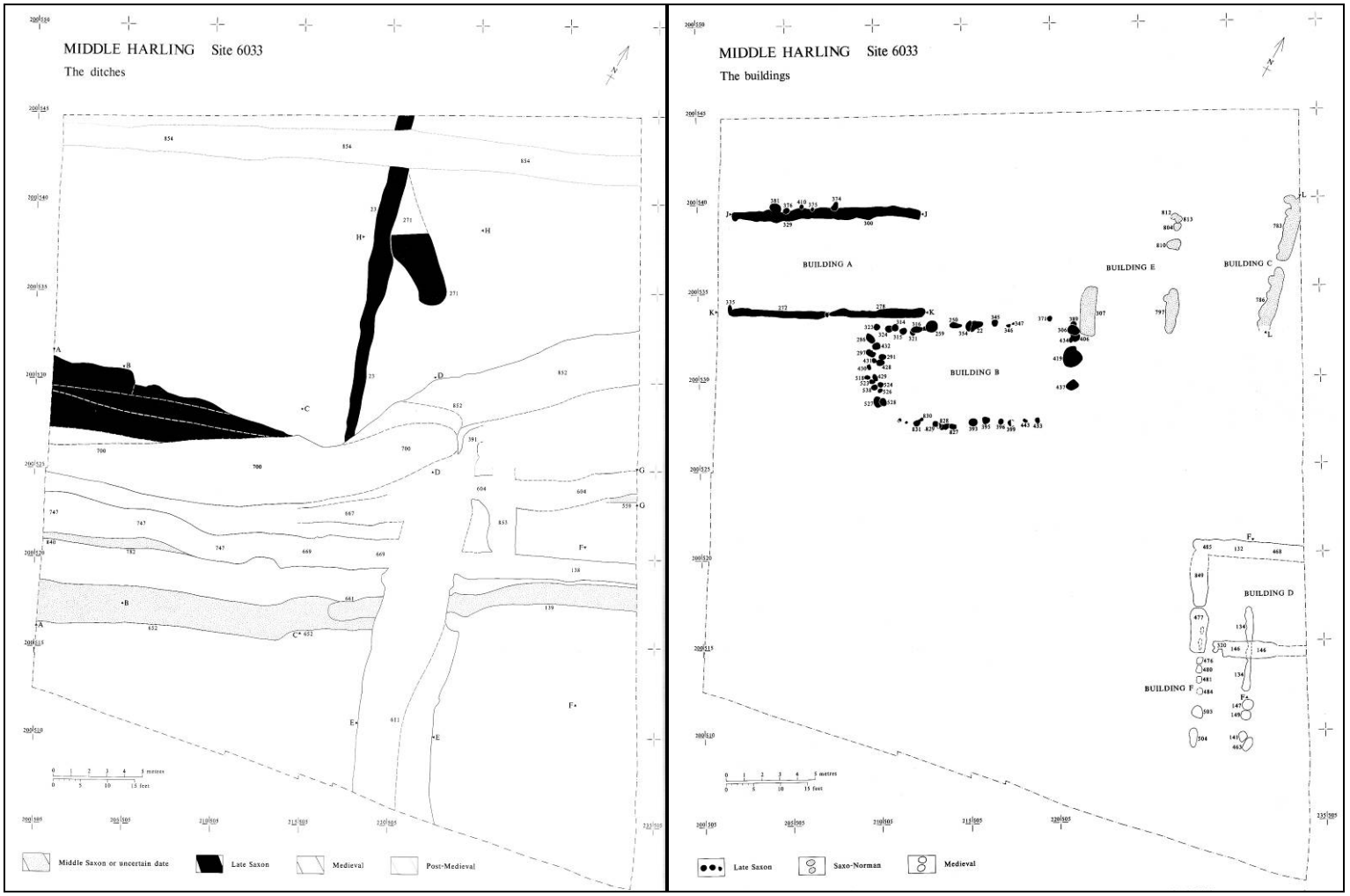



**Figure 46: Dynamic Settlement Sequence at Middle Harling (after Rogerson, 1995).**

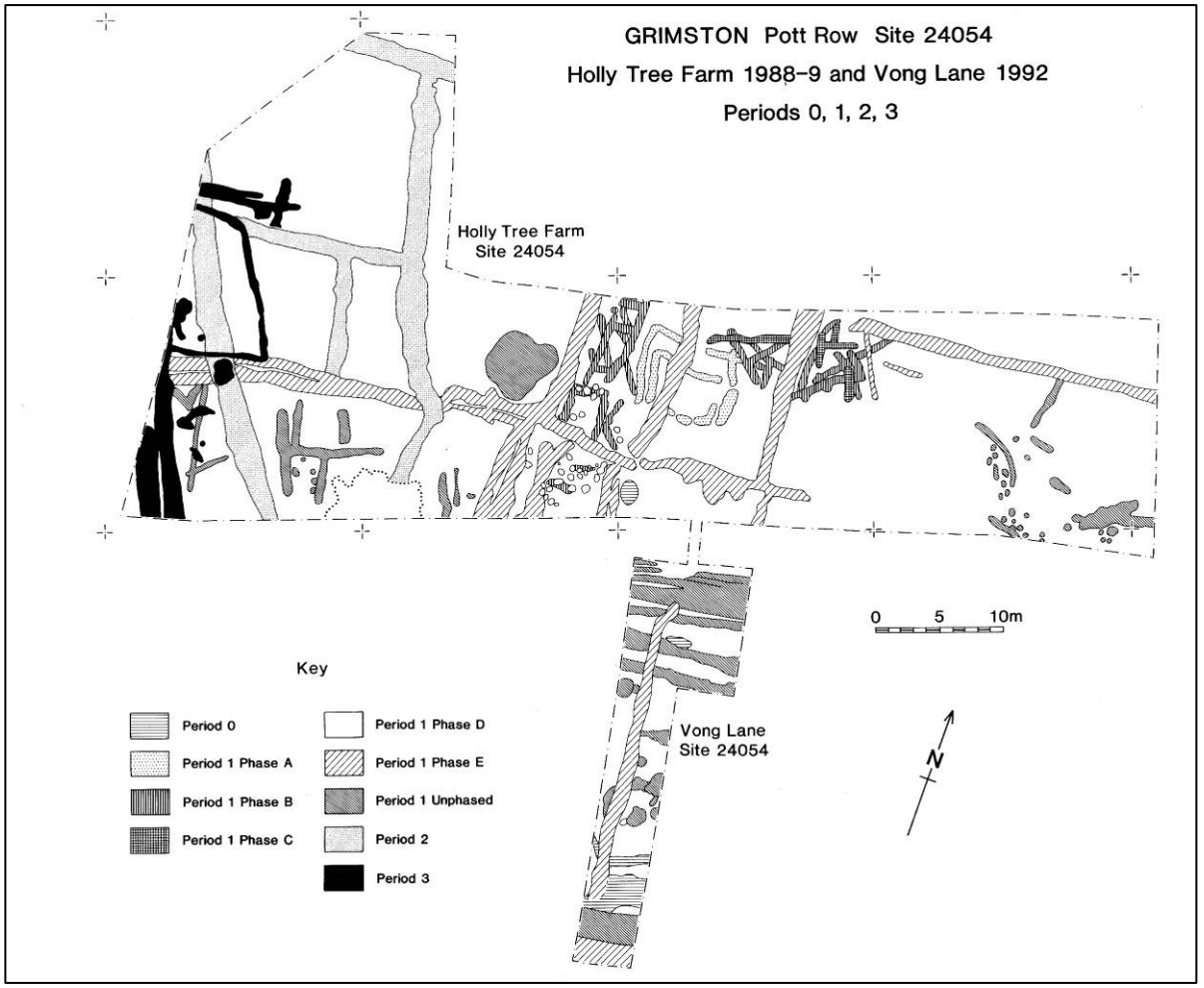



**Figure 47: Dynamic settlement sequence at Grimston (after Leah, 1994).**

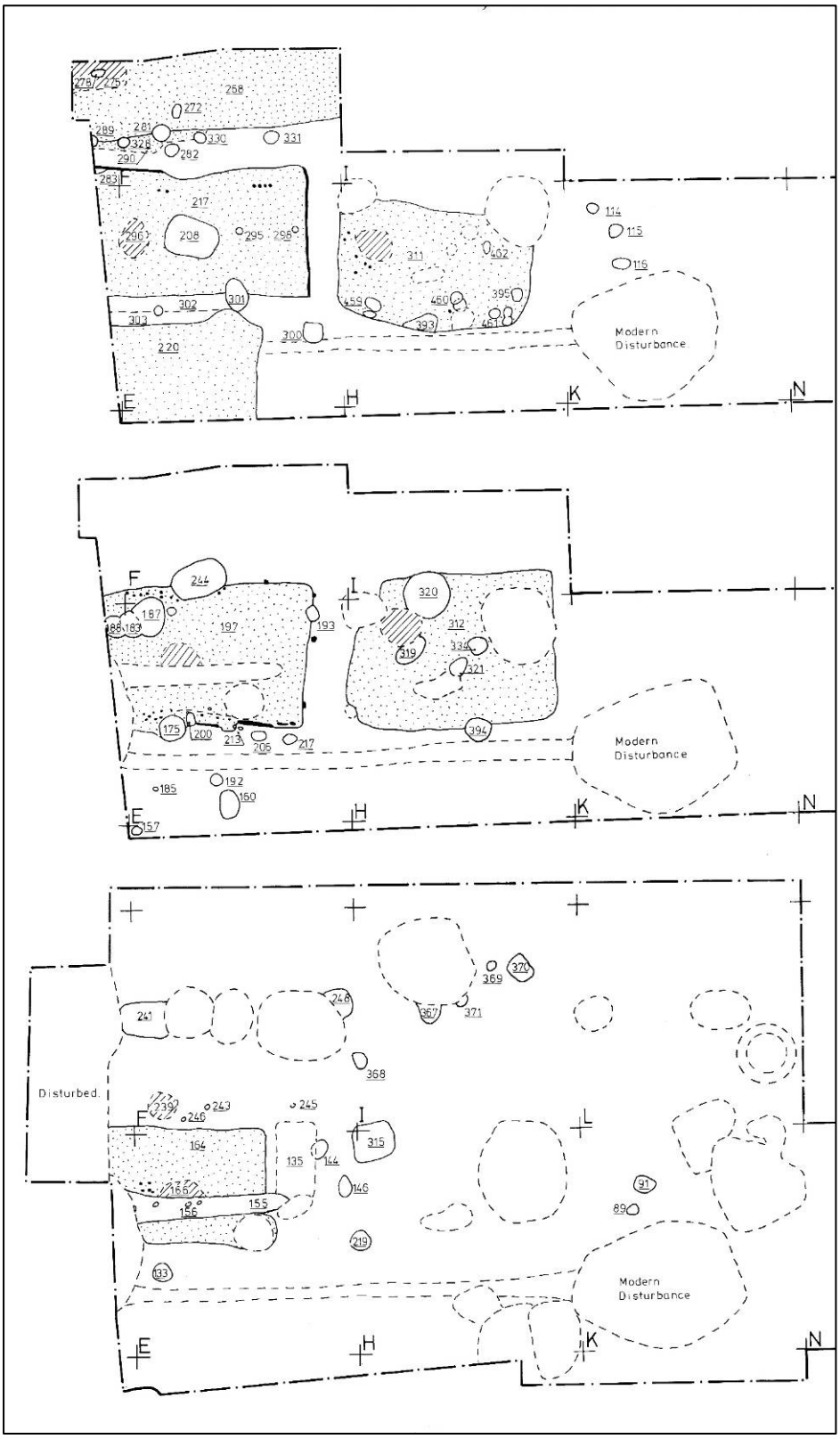



**Figure 48: Dynamic settlement sequence at Fullers Hill, Great Yarmouth (after Rogerson, 1976).**

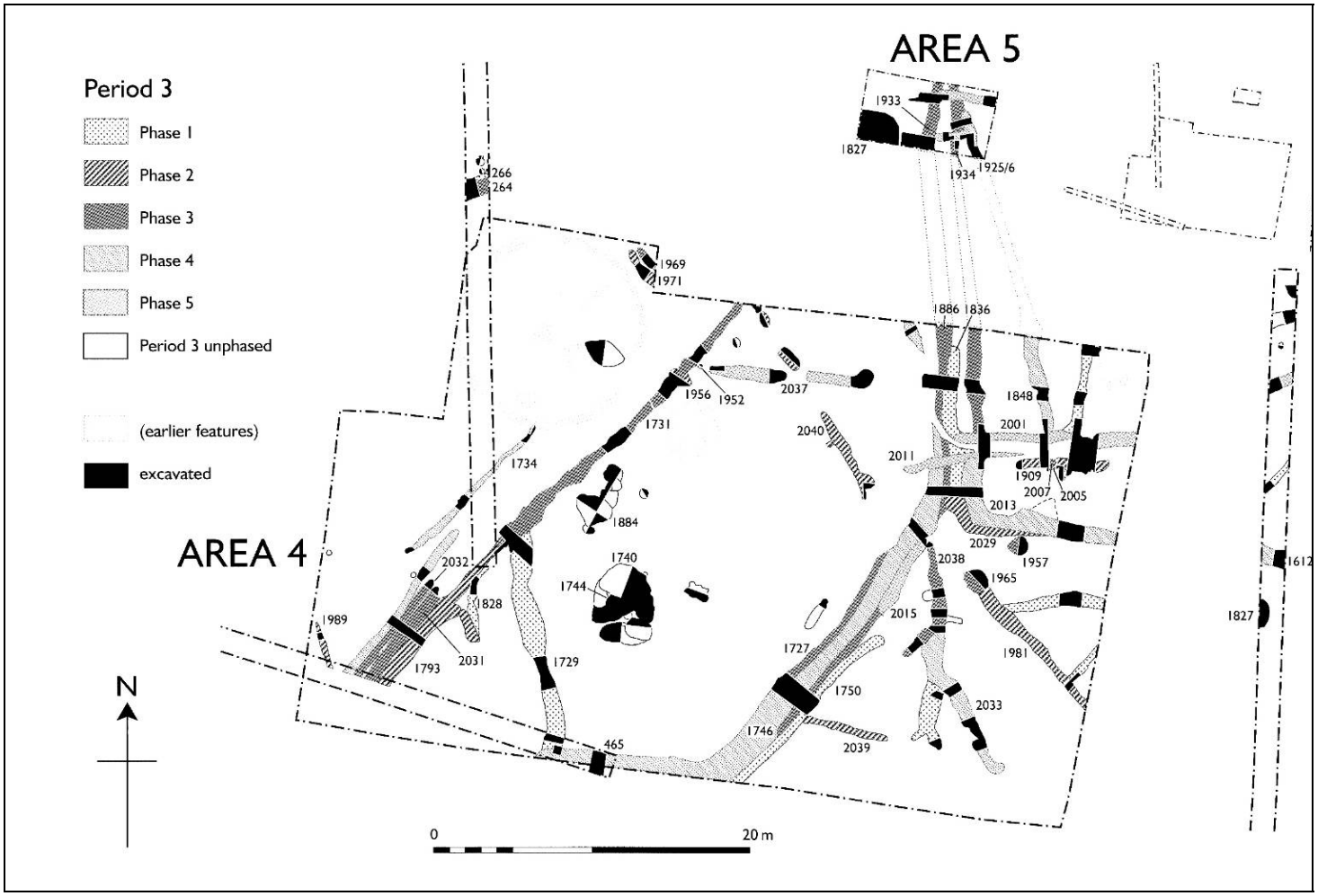



**Figure 49: Dynamic Settlement Sequence at Downham Market (after Percival, 2008).**

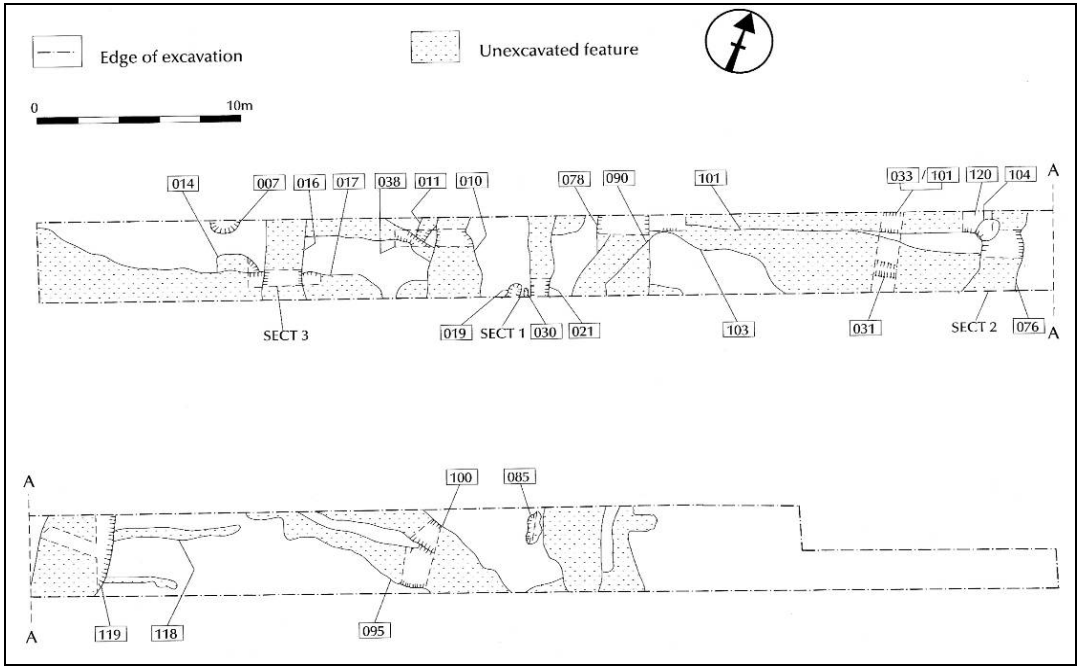




**Figure 50: Trial Trenching (above) of fieldwalked Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon site at Terrington St.Clement (left). Trial trenches located at surface scatter 'M'.**

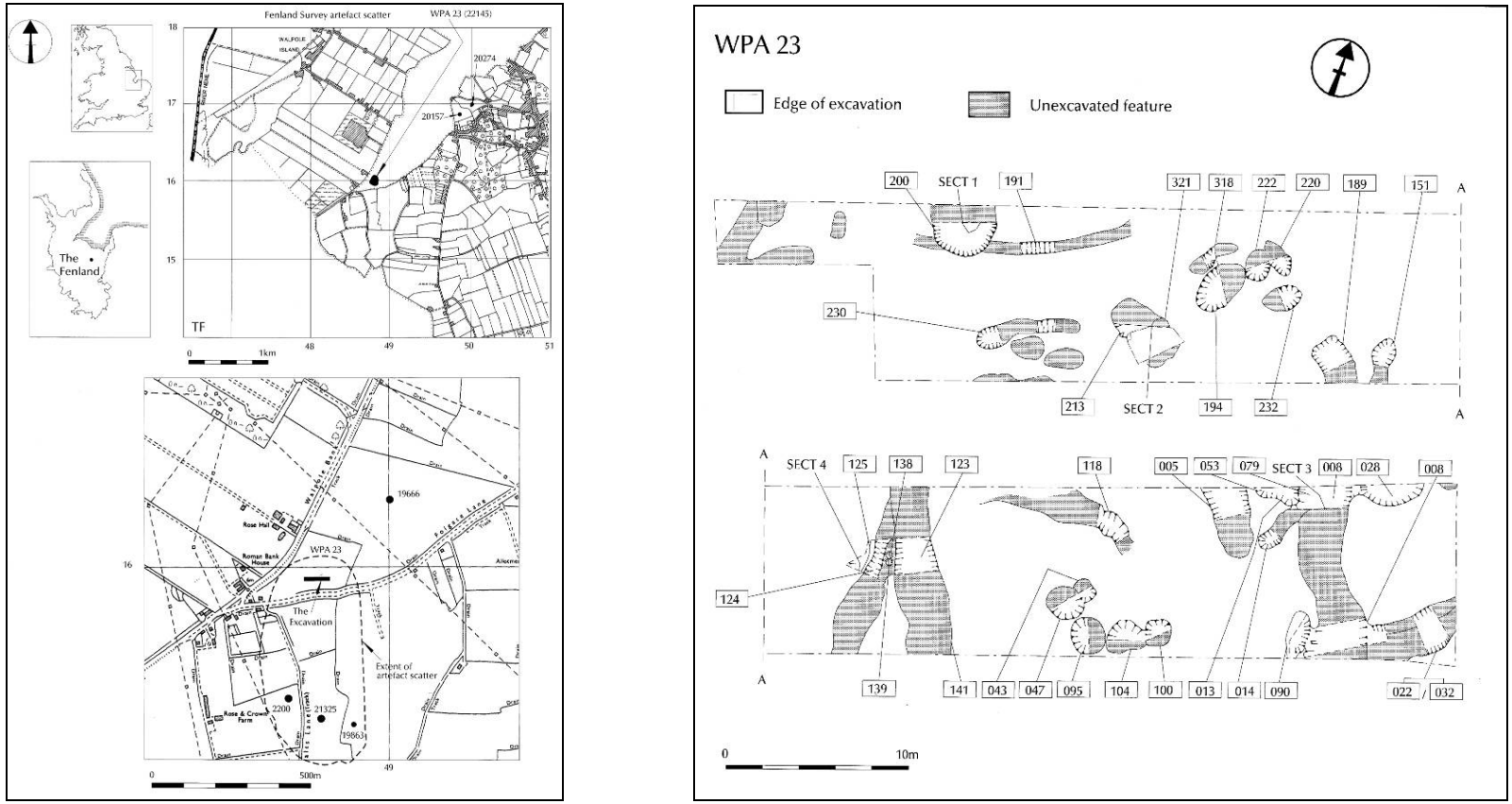



**Figure 51: Trial Trenching (right) of fieldwalked Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon site at Walpole-St Andrew (left), after Crowson, 2005)**

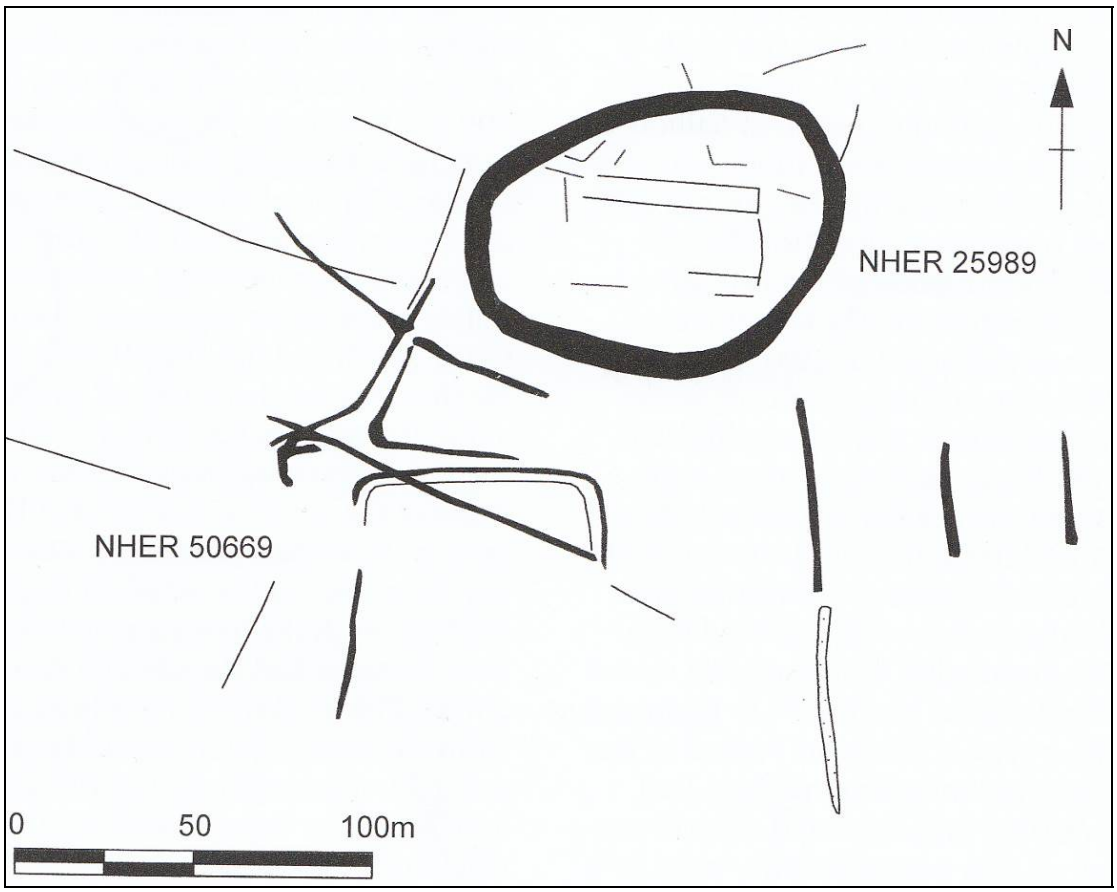



**Figure 52: Possible Anglo-Saxon 'manorial' enclosure cropmark site at Gressenhall (after Horlock et al. 2008).**

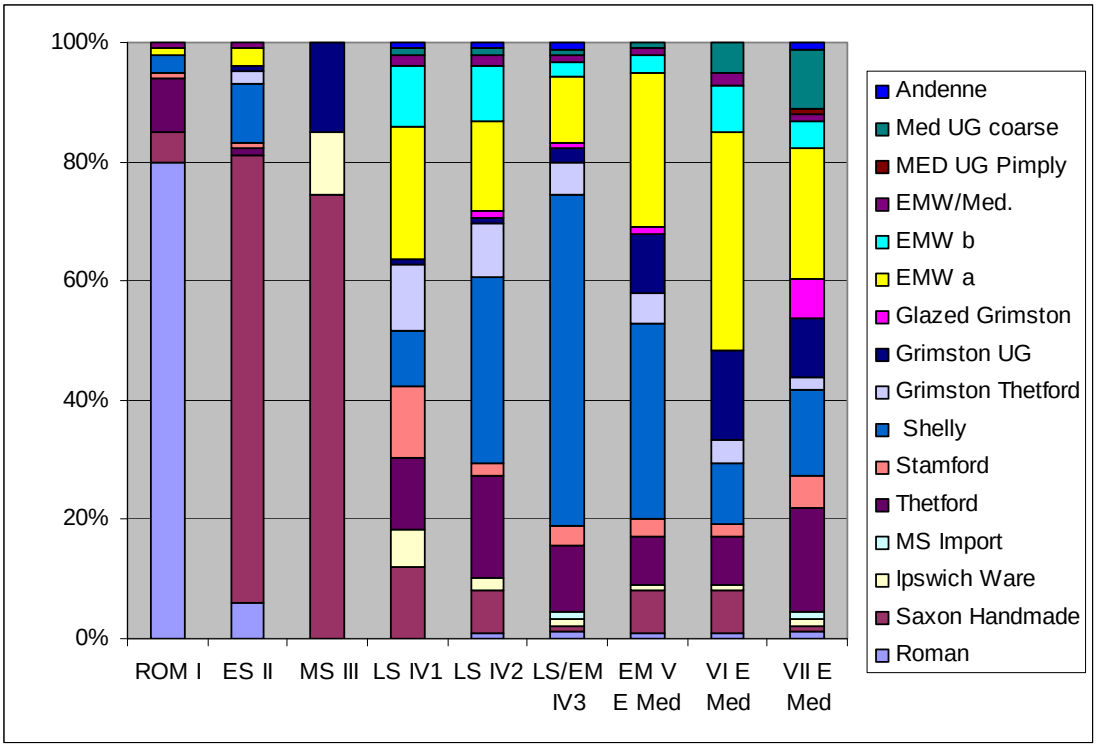



**Figure 53: Changing Material Culture Profiles at Redcastle Furze: Pottery (data after Andrews, 1995).**

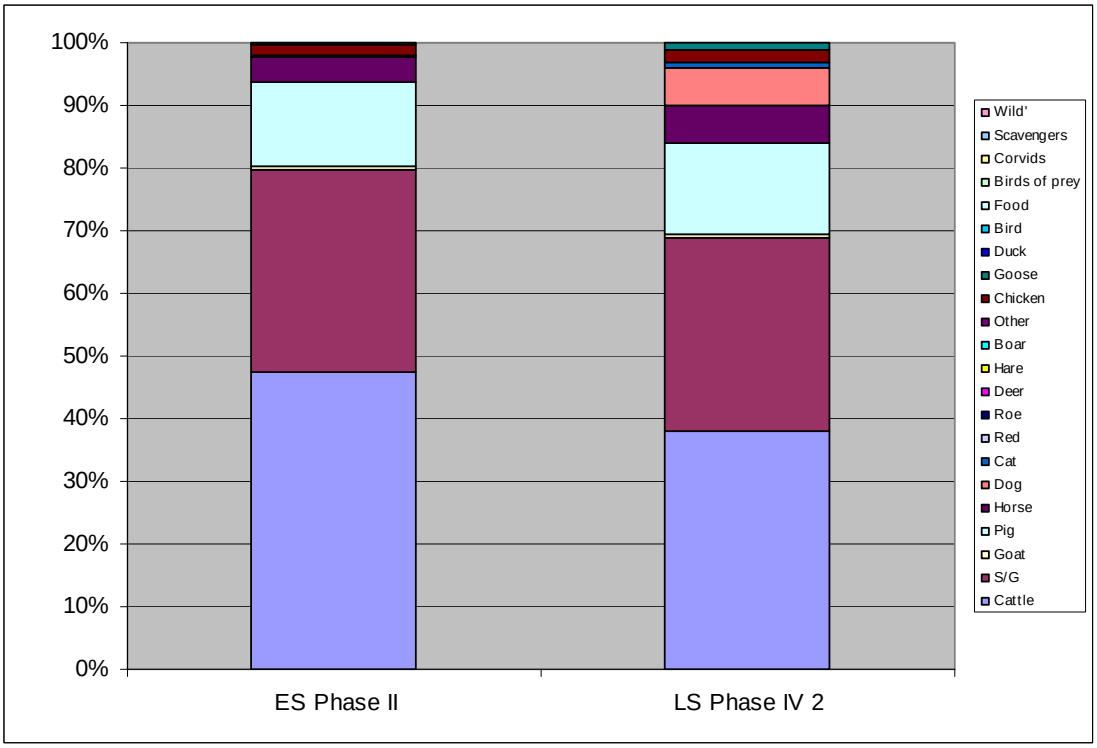



**Figure 54: Changing Material Culture Profiles at Redcastle Furze: Animal Bones (data after Andrews, 1995).**

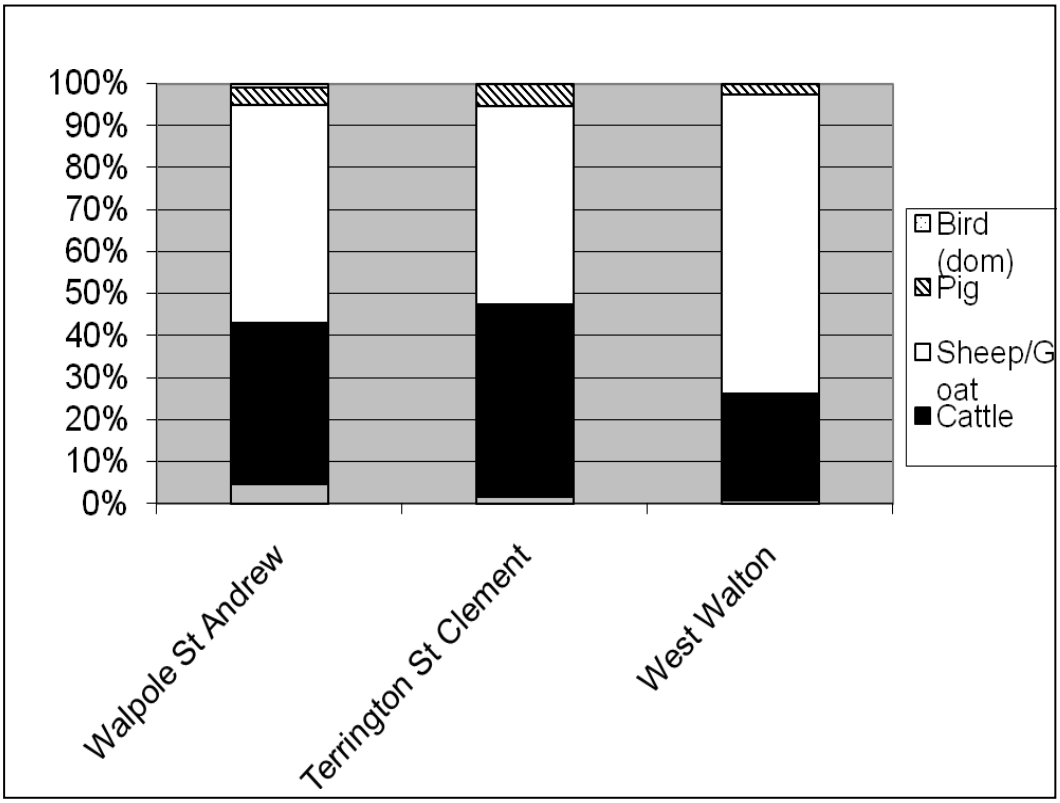



**Figure 55: Contrasting Material Culture Profiles at Fenland sites: Animal Bones (main species only, data after Crowson, 2005).**

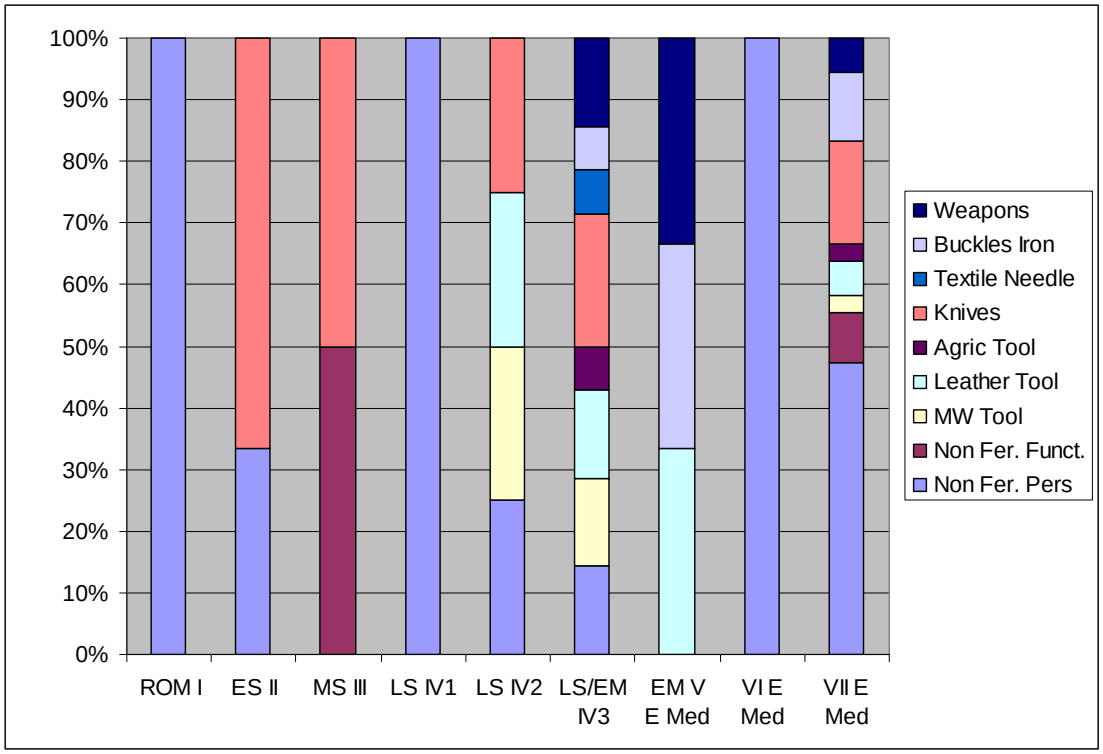



**Figure 56: Changing Material Culture Profiles at Redcastle Furze: Metal artefact loss (data after Andrews, 1995).**

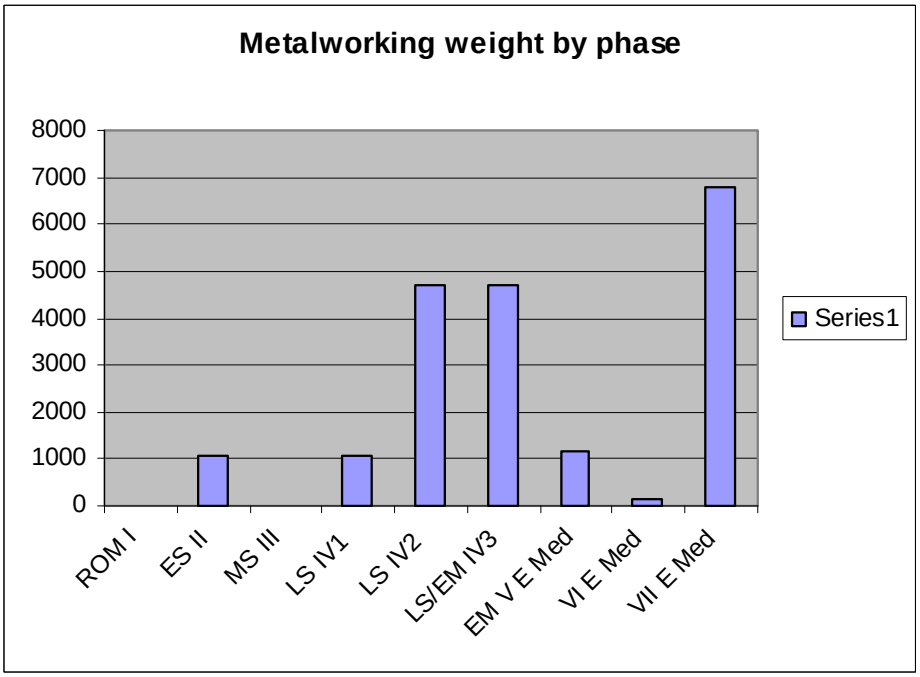



**Figure 57: Changing Material Culture Profiles at Redcastle Furze: Metalworking debris (data after Andrews, 1995).**

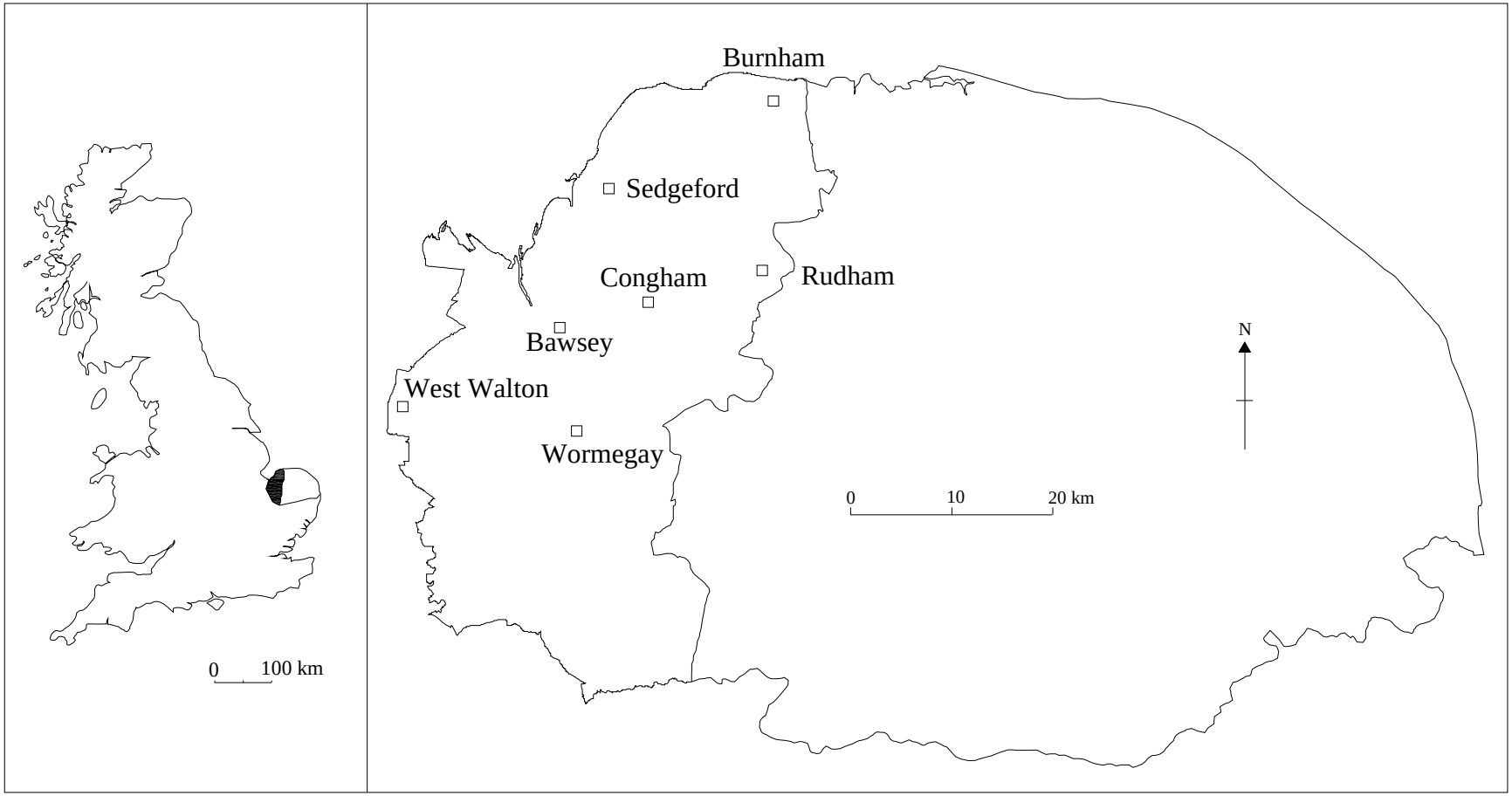



**Figure 58: The Location of the case-study sites in West Norfolk.**


**Figure 59: Aerial Photograph of Wormegay Island (© Google Image).**

**Figure 60: Wormegay 'Island': Looking west towards St. Michael's church from NHER 17286.**

**Figure 61: Congham: Looking south across NHER 25765.**

**Figure 62: Congham: Looking west across NHER 35928 towards fen-edge.**

**Figure 63: Rudham: Looking south from NHER 32133 with St. Peter's Church, West Rudham and NHER 32130 (light yellow field) in background.**

**Figure 64: Burnham: Looking northeast towards Burnham Overy from southwest extent of NHER28127.**

**Figure 65: Sedgeford: Looking southwest across NHER 1079, raised area is the Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon settlement location (see Chapter 9).**


**Figure 66: Aerial Photograph of Bawsey, St. James' church in centre (© Google Image).**

**Figure 67: Bawsey: NHER 25962 from west (looking east), 'waterfront' to left (see Chapter 10).**

**Figure 68: West Walton: Looking northeast over fen-edge from southern extent of NHER 25853 adjacent to St. Mary's church.**

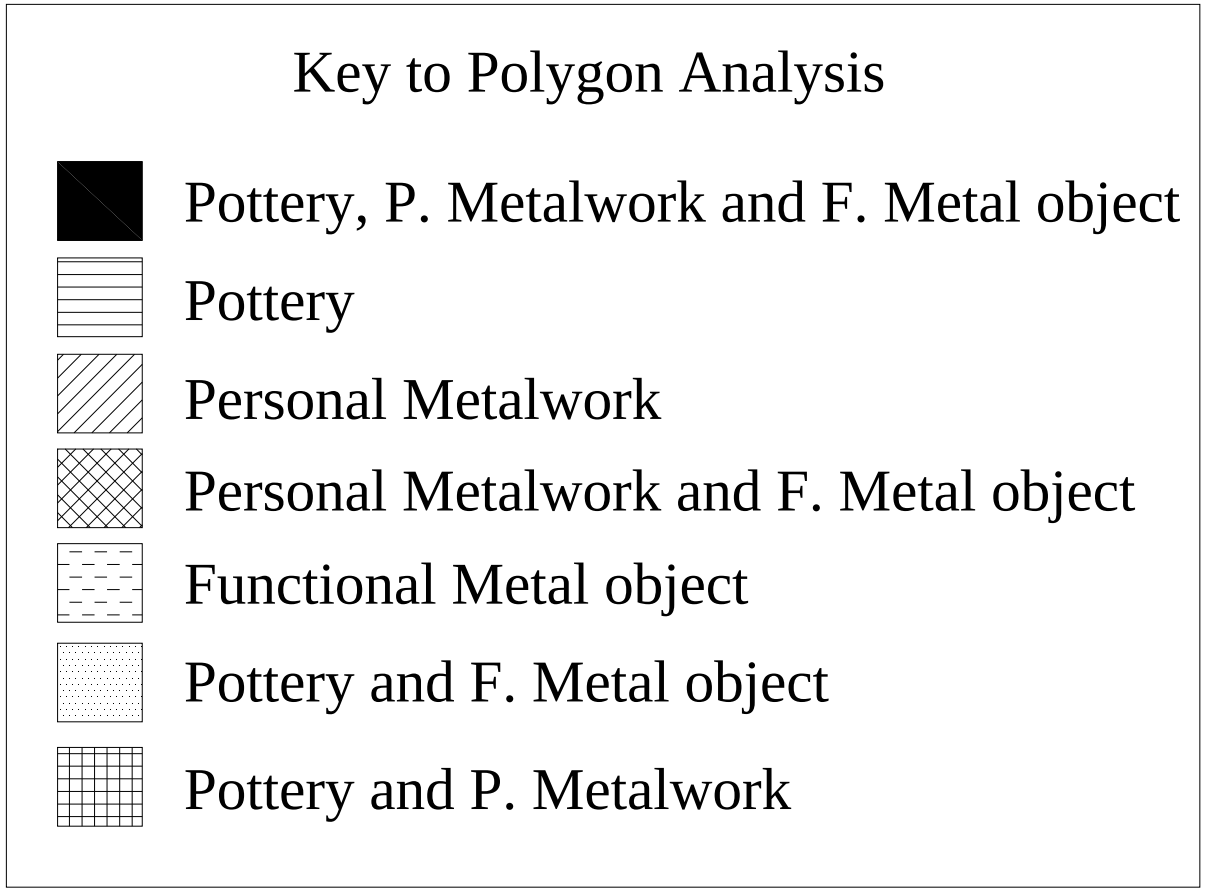



**Figure 69: Key to extensive Polygon Analysis.**


**Figure 70: Early Anglo-Saxon polygon analysis for Wormegay (for full key see Figure. 69**). *© Crown Copyright/database right 2010. An Ordnance Survey/EDINA supplied service.*

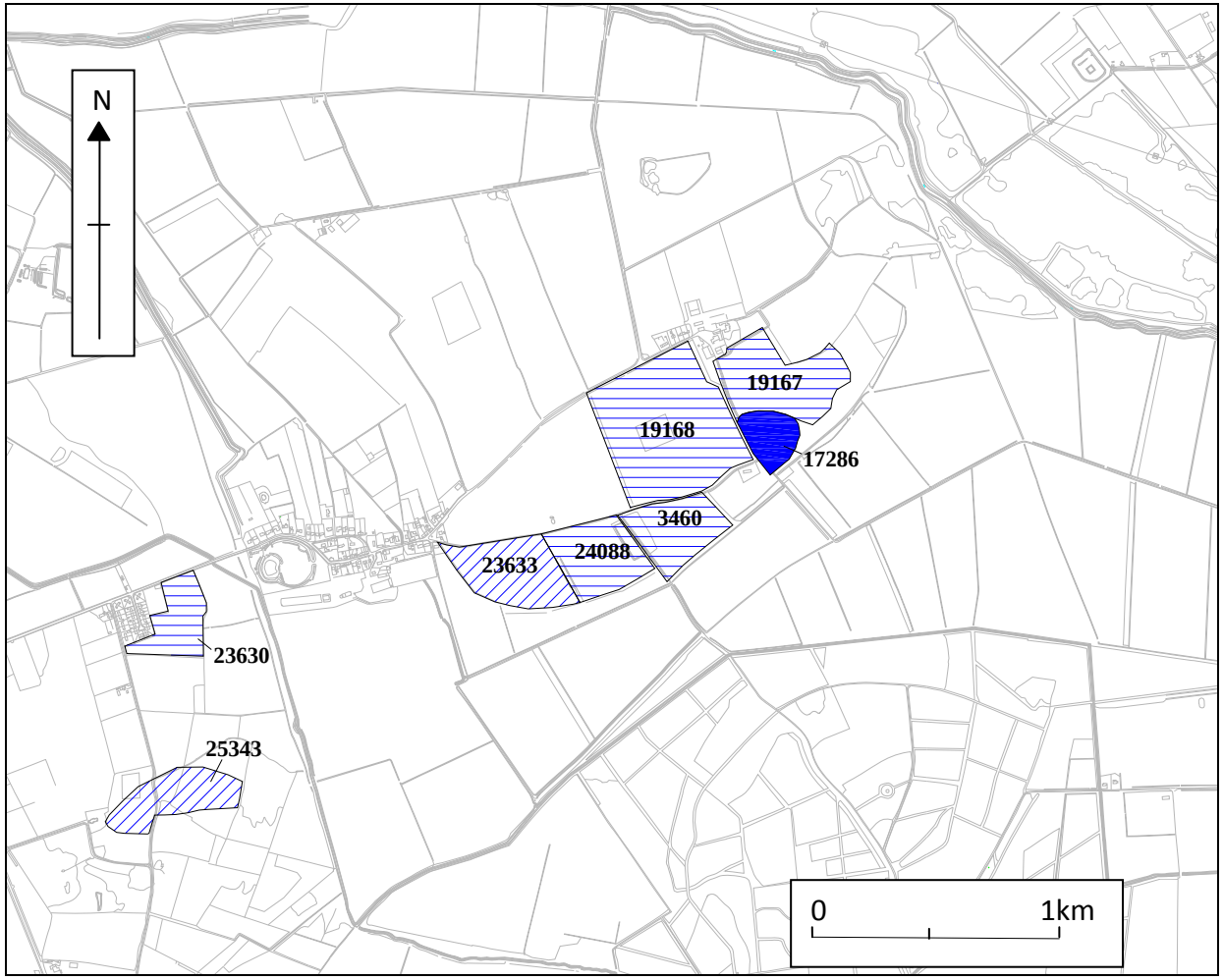



**Figure 71: Middle Anglo-Saxon polygon analysis for Wormegay (for full key see Figure. 69**). *© Crown Copyright/database right 2010. An Ordnance Survey/EDINA supplied service.*

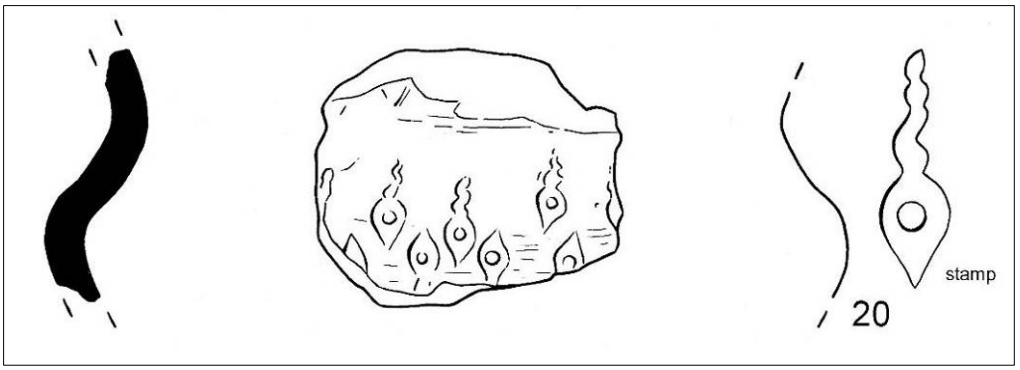



**Figure 72: Stamped Early Anglo-Saxon pottery from NHER 17286 (after Rogerson and Ashley, 2008).** 2.1

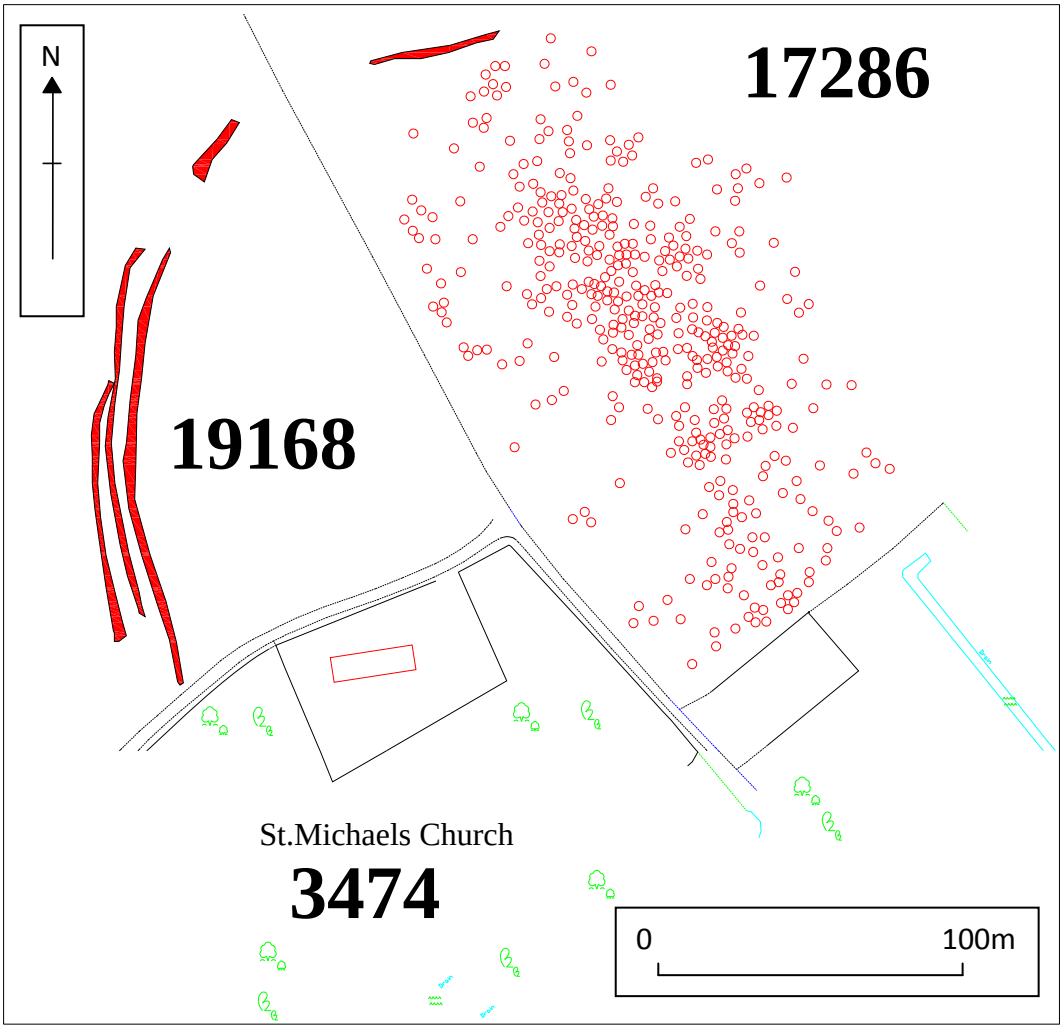



**Figure 73: Wormegay: NHER 19168 and NHER 17286, cropmarks and intensive fieldwalking results (red dots are individual Ipswich Ware findspots) (Ipswich Ware after Andrews, 1992).**

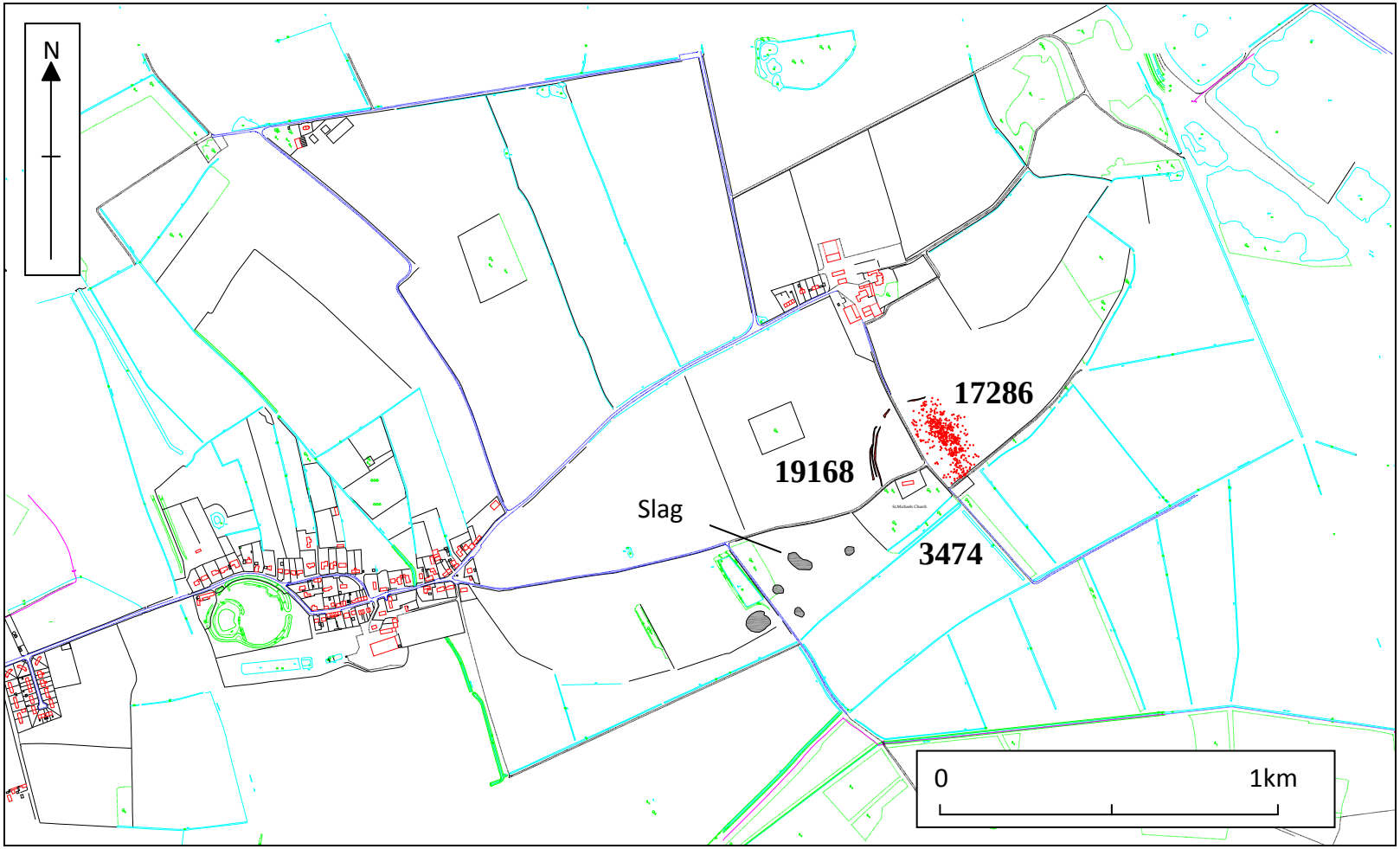



**Figure 74: Wormegay 'Island' showing location of undated slag scatters (slag after Andrews, 1992**). *© Crown Copyright/database right 2010. An Ordnance Survey/EDINA supplied service.*


**Figure 75: Late Anglo-Saxon polygon analysis for Wormegay (for full key see Figure. 69)**. *© Crown Copyright/database right 2010. An Ordnance Survey/EDINA supplied service.*

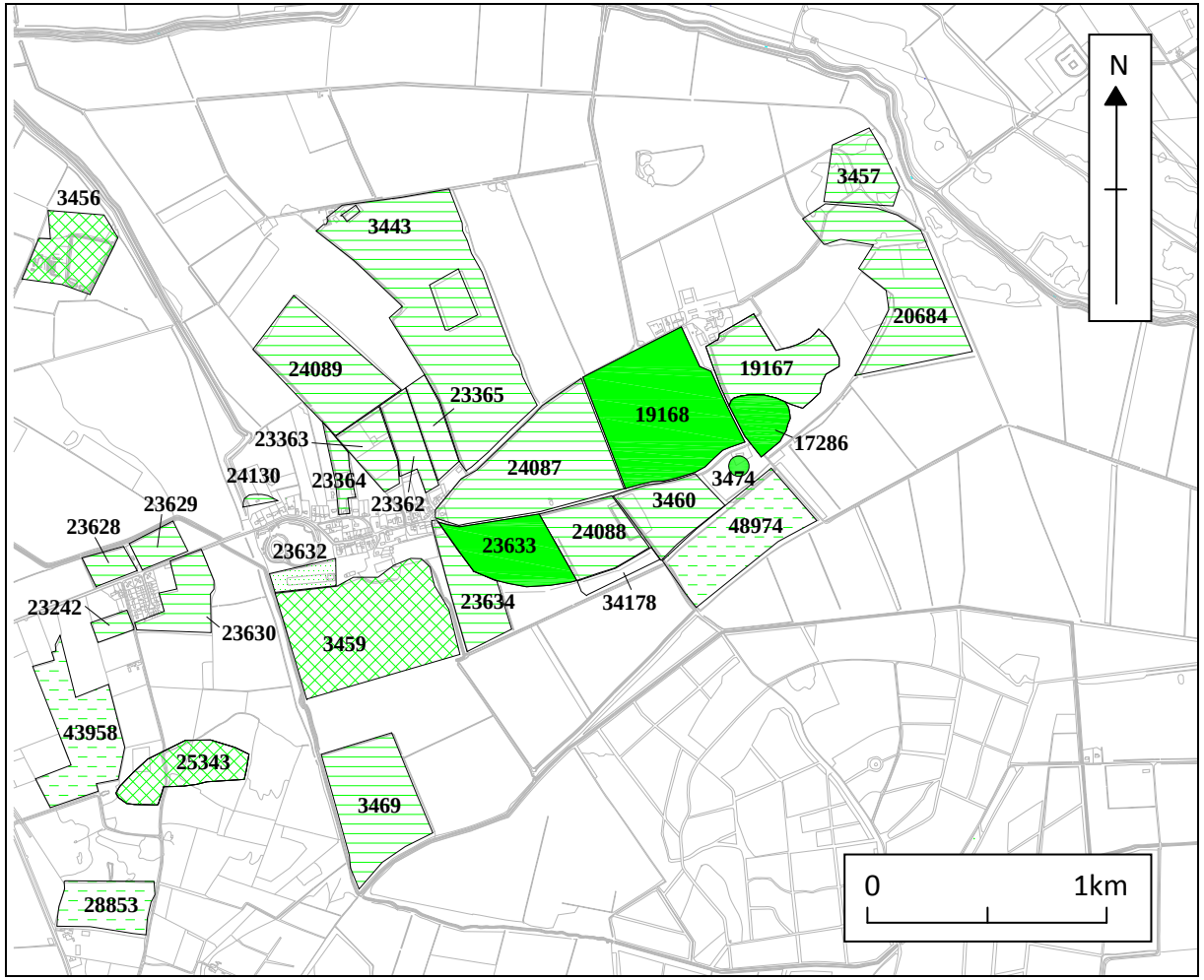



**Figure 76: Medieval polygon analysis for Wormegay (for full key see Figure. 69)**. *© Crown Copyright/database right 2010. An Ordance Survey/EDINA supplied service.*

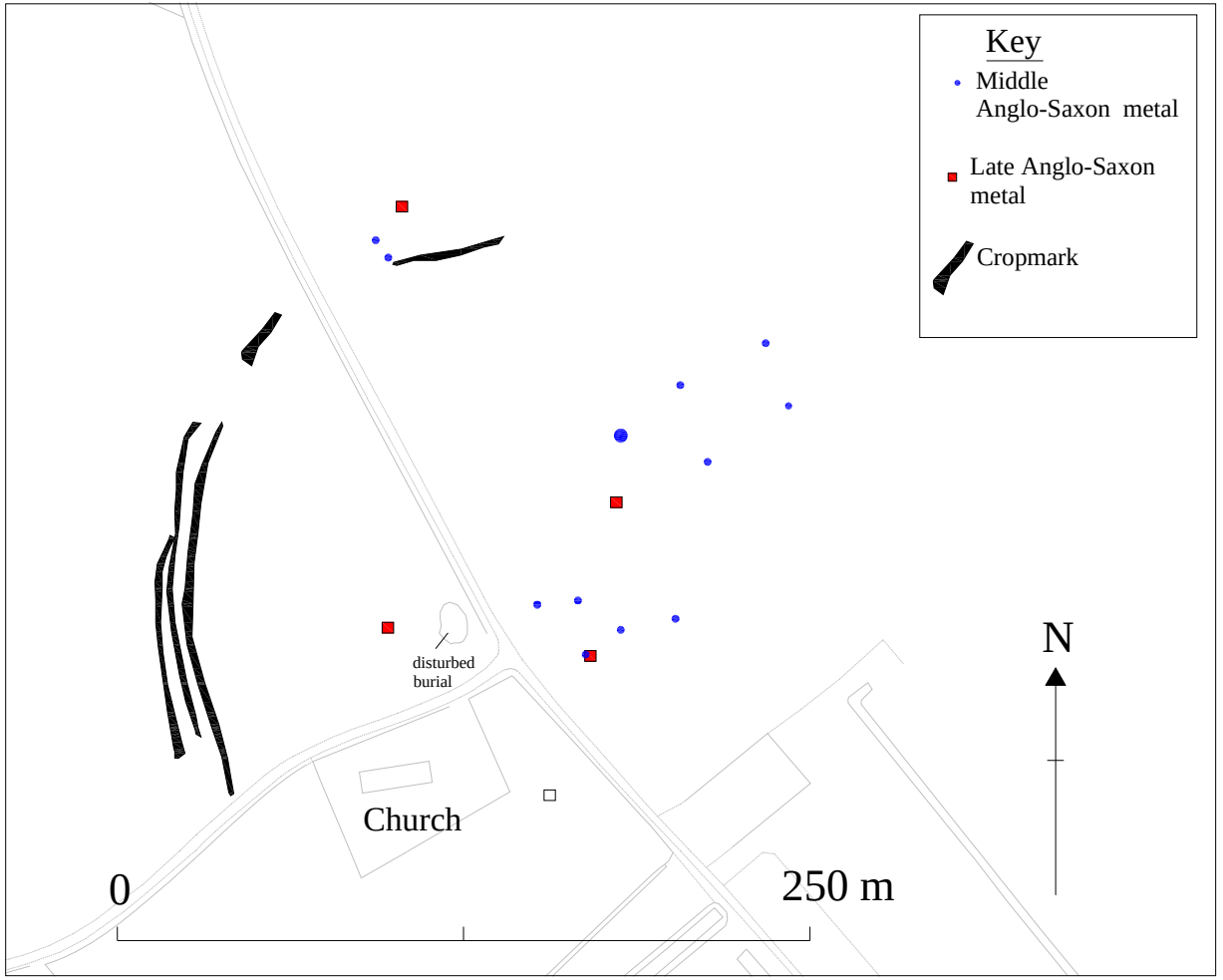



**Figure 77: Wormegay: NHER 19168 and NHER 17286, Cropmarks and located Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon metal finds.**

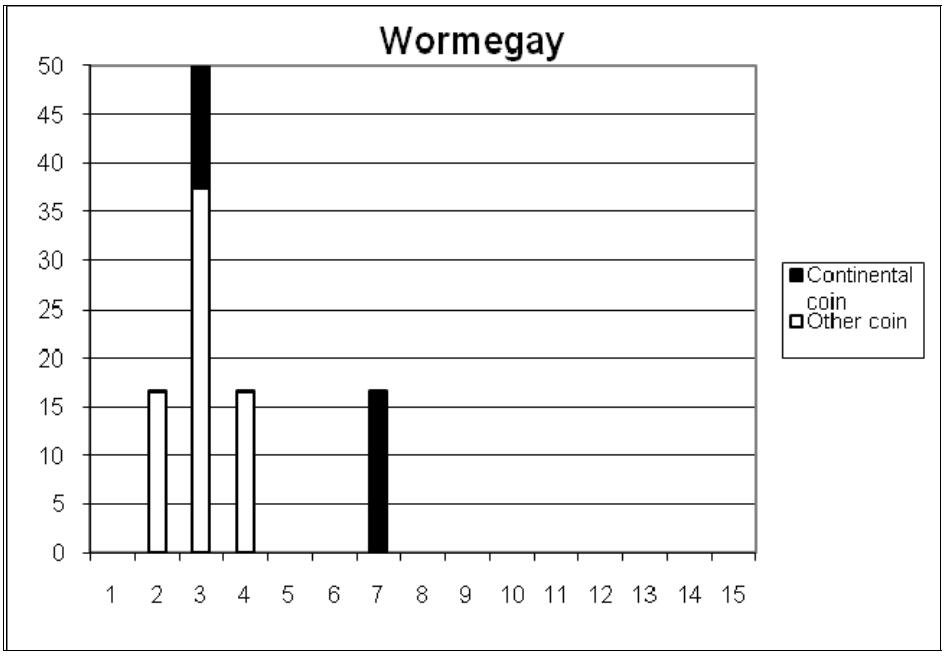



**Figure 78: Wormegay: Proportions of coinage (percentage) by date group and source**. Coin group dates (adapted after Naylor 2007, new groups in italics): **1** pre-680; **2** c 680–710; **3** c710–40; **4** c 740–60; **5** c 760–90; **6** c 790–810; **7** 810–40; **8** c 840–55; **9** 855-70**;** ***10*** *870–900;* ***11*** *900–30;* ***12*** *930-60;* ***13*** *960-90;* ***14*** *990-1020****;*** ***15*** *1020-50* (data NHER and Fitzwilliam Museum Online Corpus).

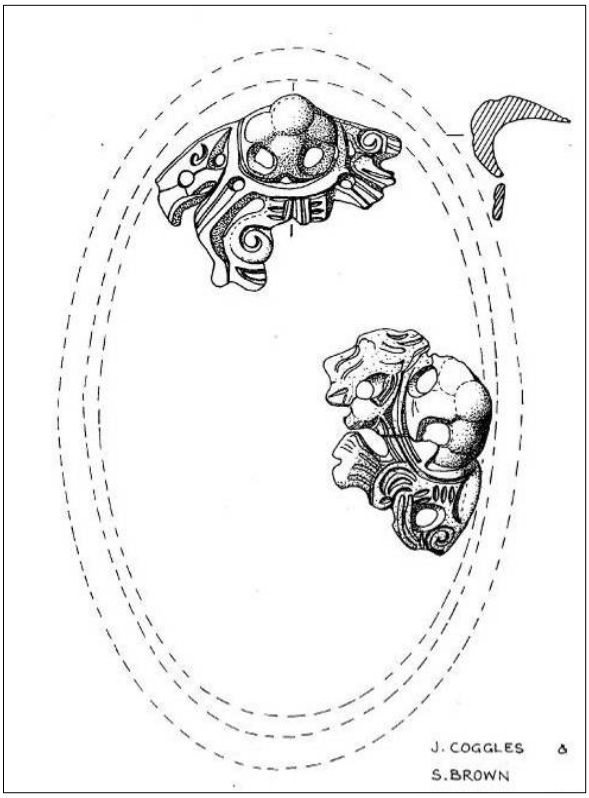



**Figure 79: Oval brooch fragments from Wormegay, NHER 17286**, 1:1.

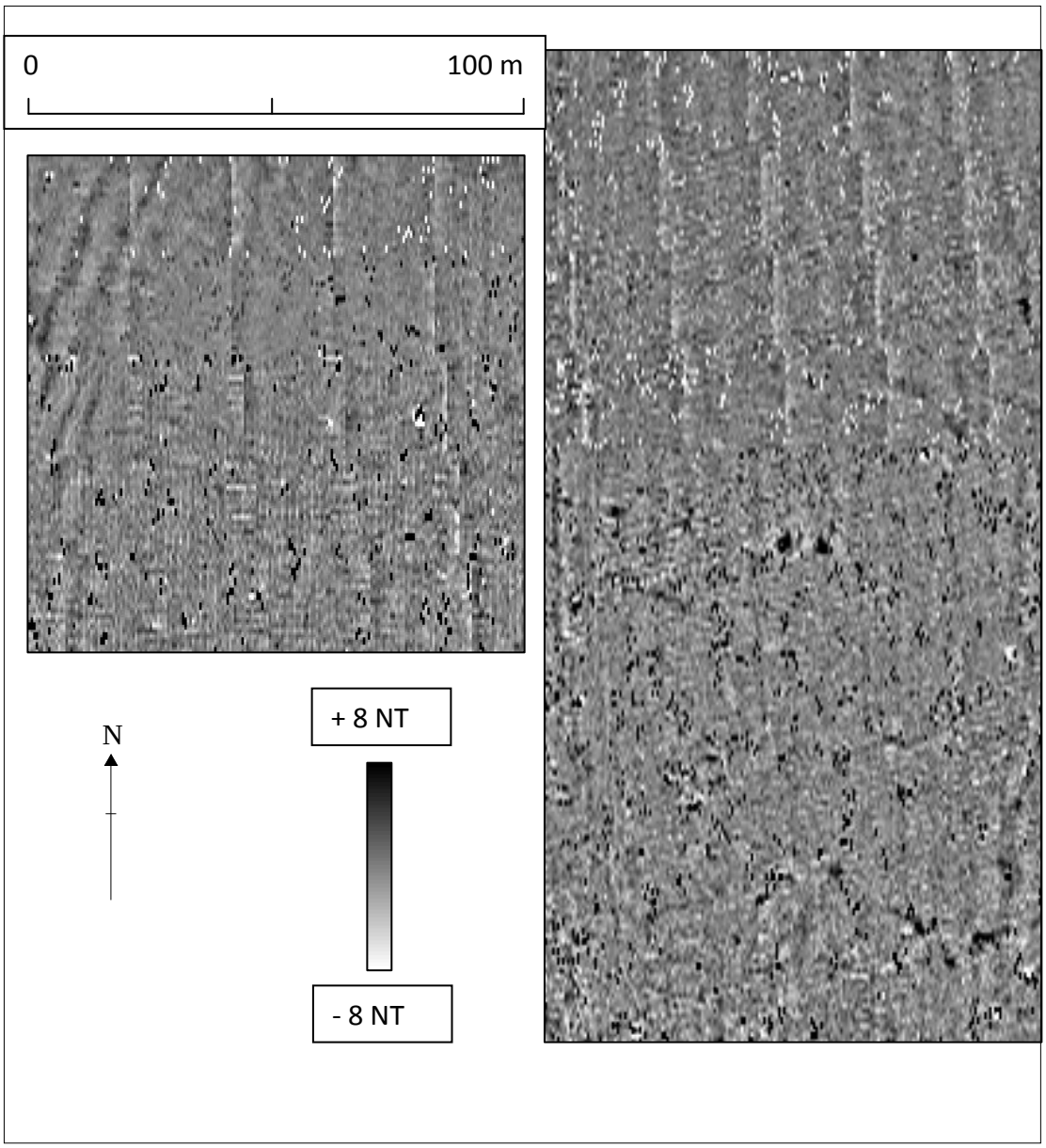



**Figure 80: Wormegay: NHER 19168 and NHER 17286: Raw interpreted Geophysical results.**


**Figure 81: Wormegay: NHER 19168 and NHER 17286. Interpreted Geophysical features: Modern.**

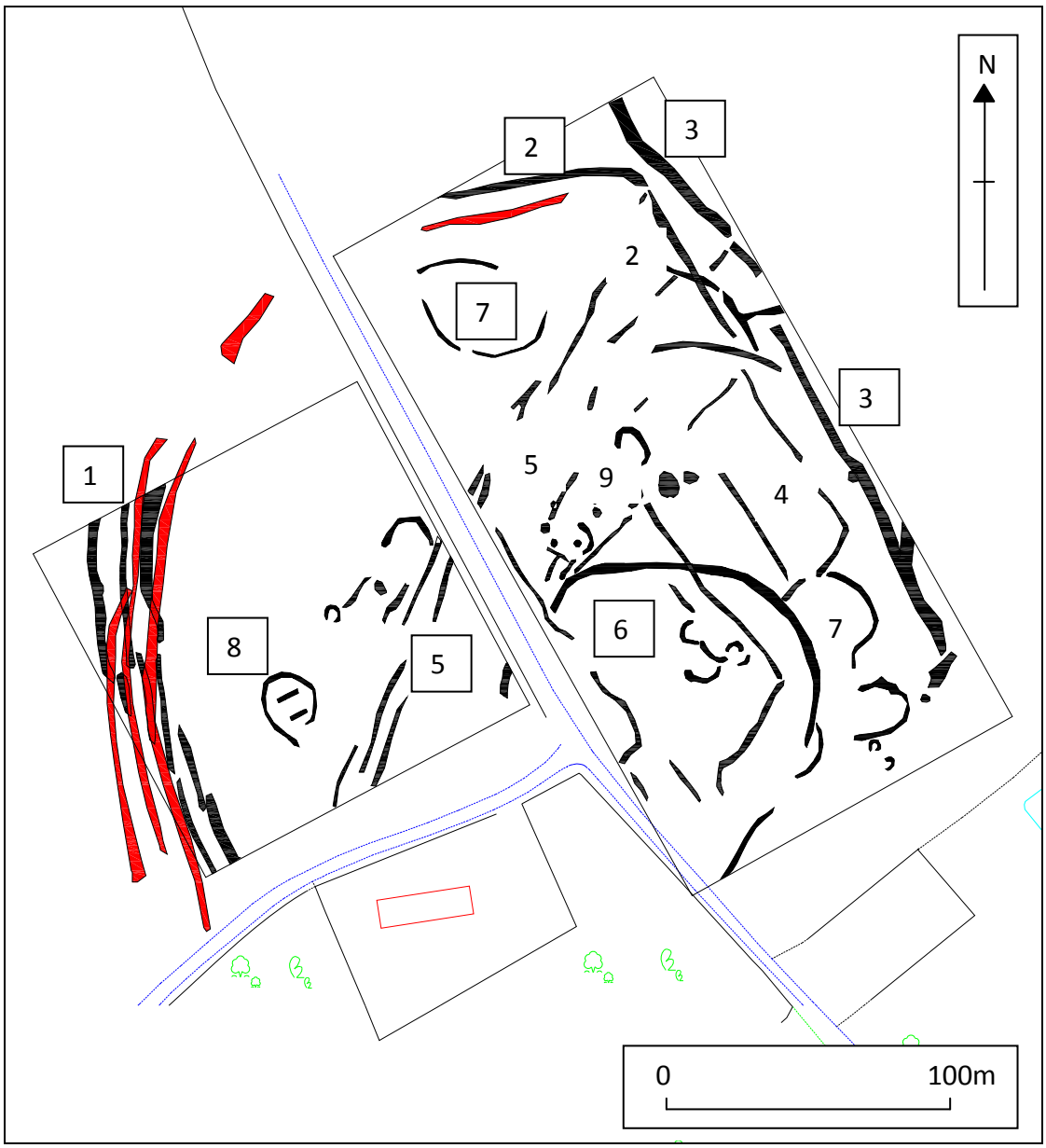



**Figure 82: Wormegay: NHER 19168 and NHER 17286. Interpreted Geophysical features numbered.**

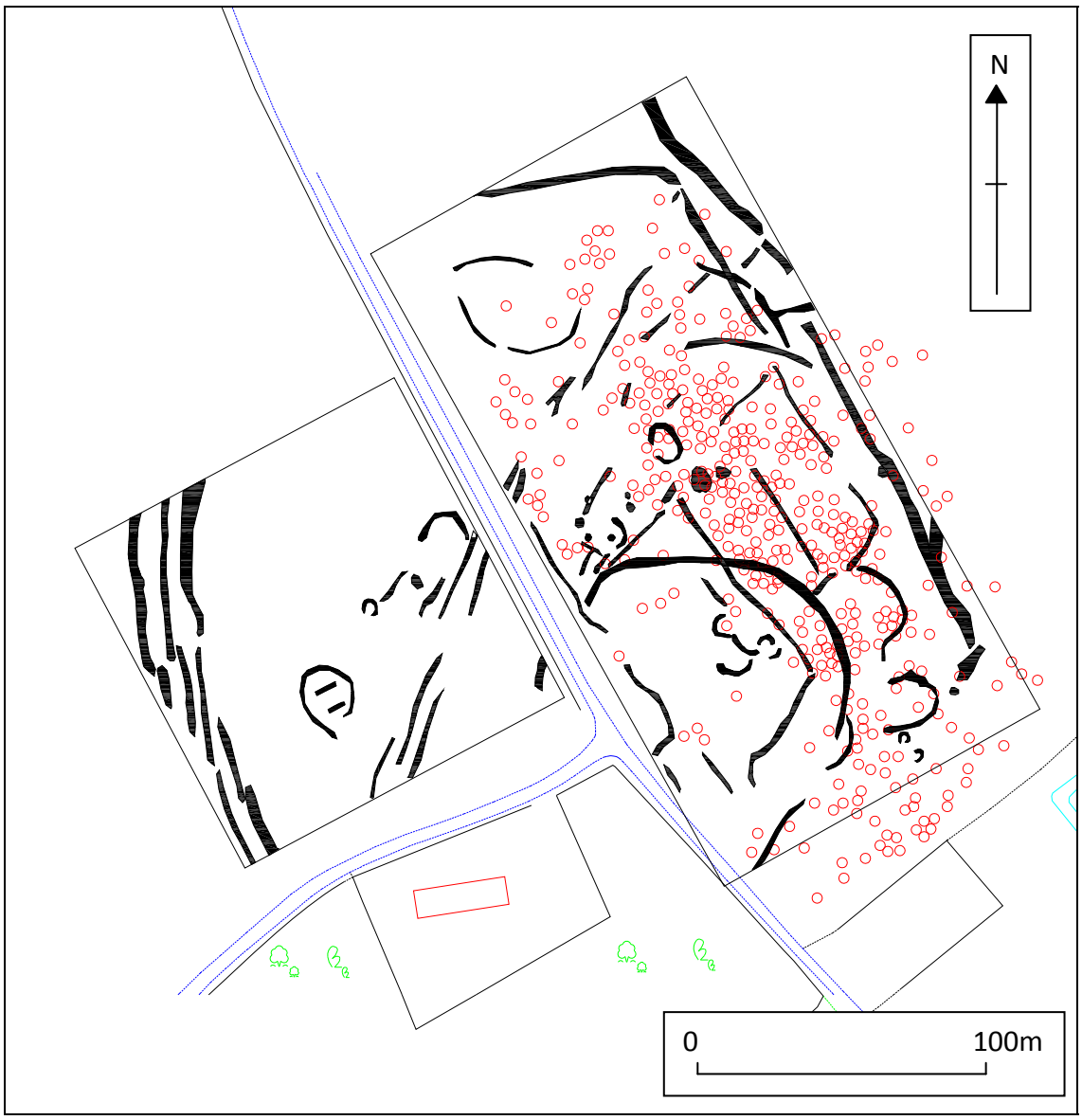



**Figure 83: Wormegay: NHER 19168 and NHER 17286. Interpreted Geophysical features against pottery scatter.**

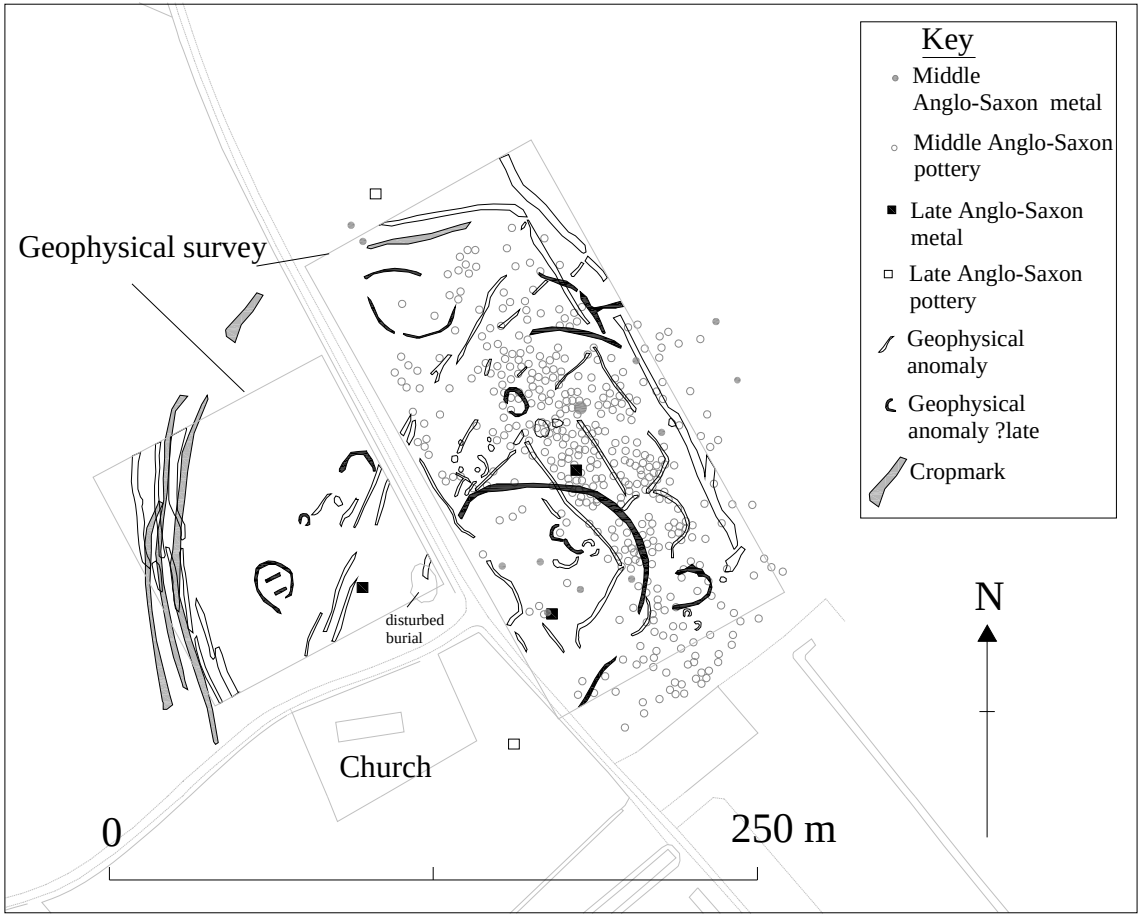



**Figure 84: Wormegay: NHER 19168 and NHER 17286: Interpreted Geophysical features including possible 'late' anomalies, fieldwalking and located metal detector finds.**


**Figure 85: Aerial photograph of Congham/Grimston area showing locations for polygon analysis coverage in Figures 86-90 *(red boxes).*** *© Google Image.*

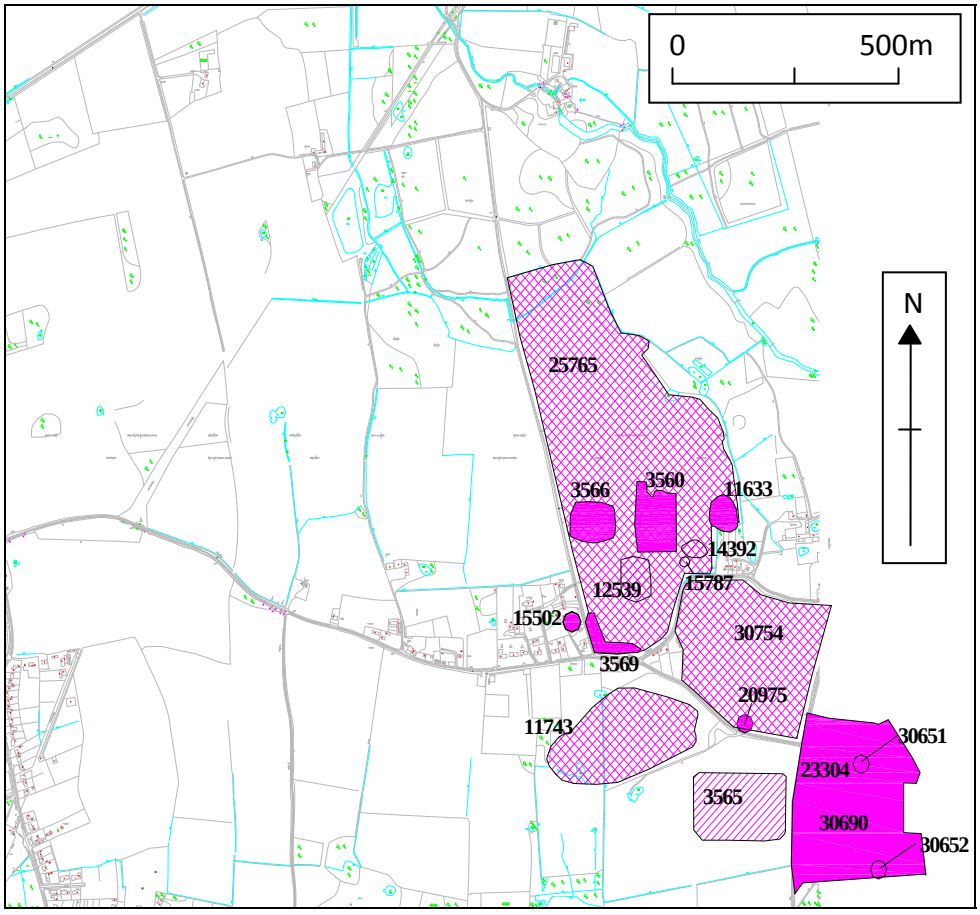



**Figure 86: Early Anglo-Saxon polygon analysis for Congham (for full key see Figure. 69).** *© Crown Copyright/database right 2010. An Ordnance Survey/EDINA supplied service.*

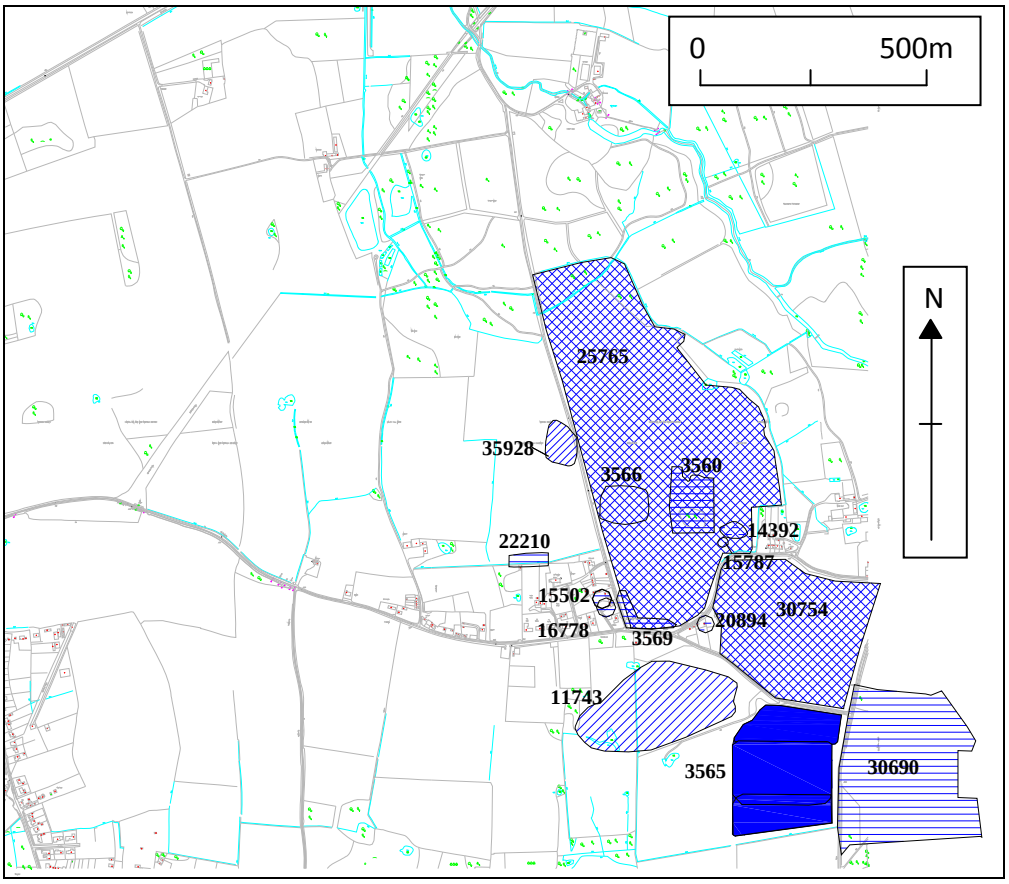



**Figure 87: Middle Anglo-Saxon polygon analysis for Congham (for full key see Figure. 69**). *© Crown Copyright/database right 2010. An Ordnance Survey/EDINA supplied service.*

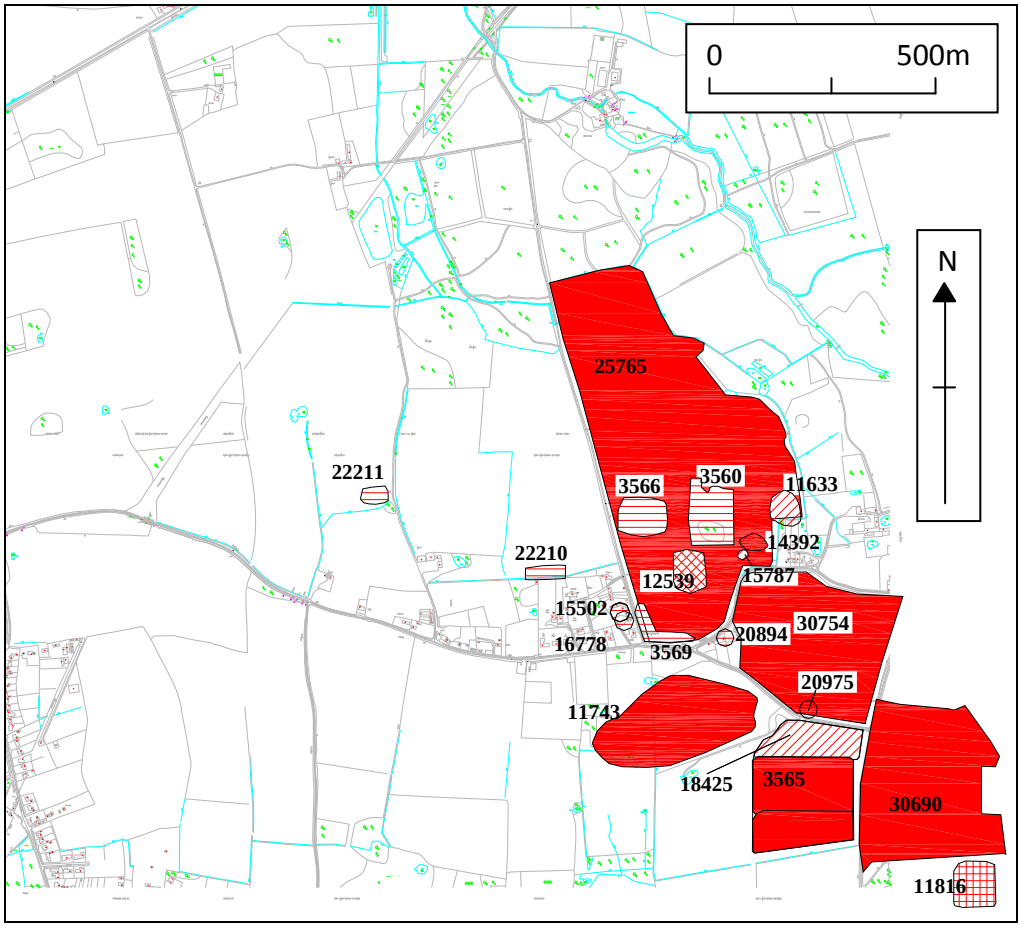



**Figure 88: Late Anglo-Saxon polygon analysis for Congham (for full key see Figure. 69**). *© Crown Copyright/database right 2010. An Ordnance Survey/EDINA supplied service.*

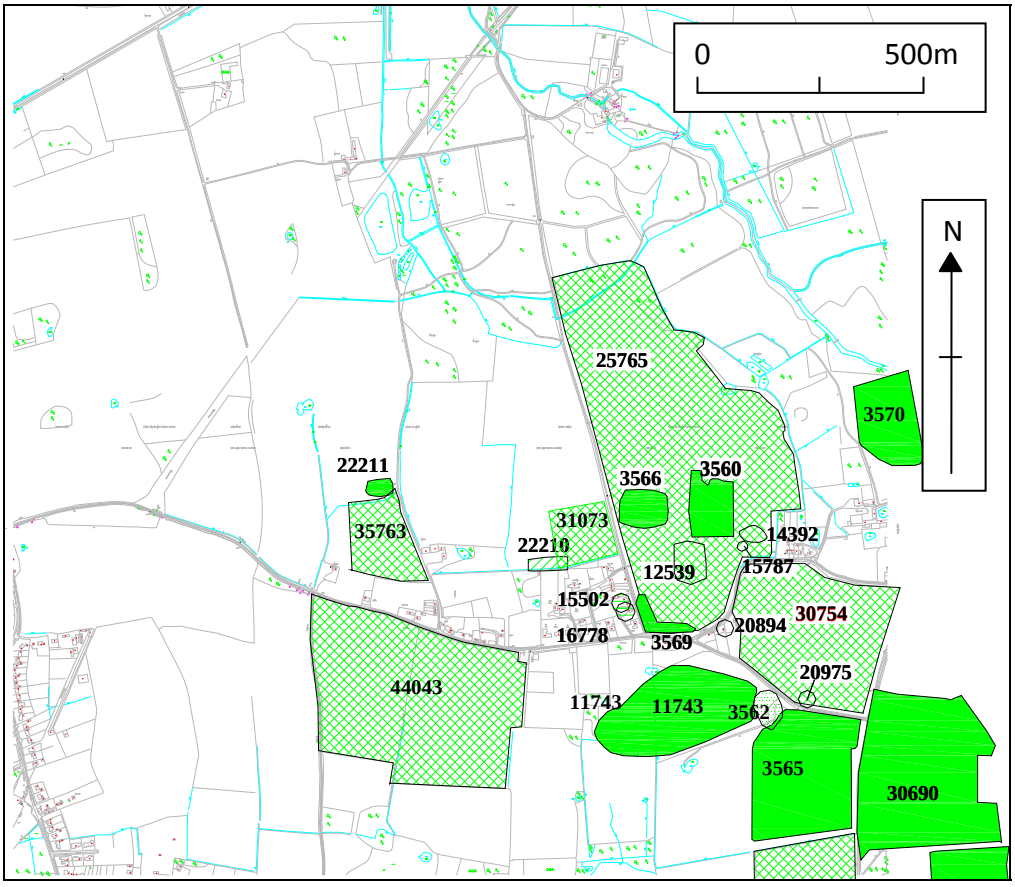



**Figure 89: Late Anglo-Saxon polygon analysis for Congham (for full key see Figure. 69**). *© Crown Copyright/database right 2010. An Ordnance Survey/EDINA supplied service.*

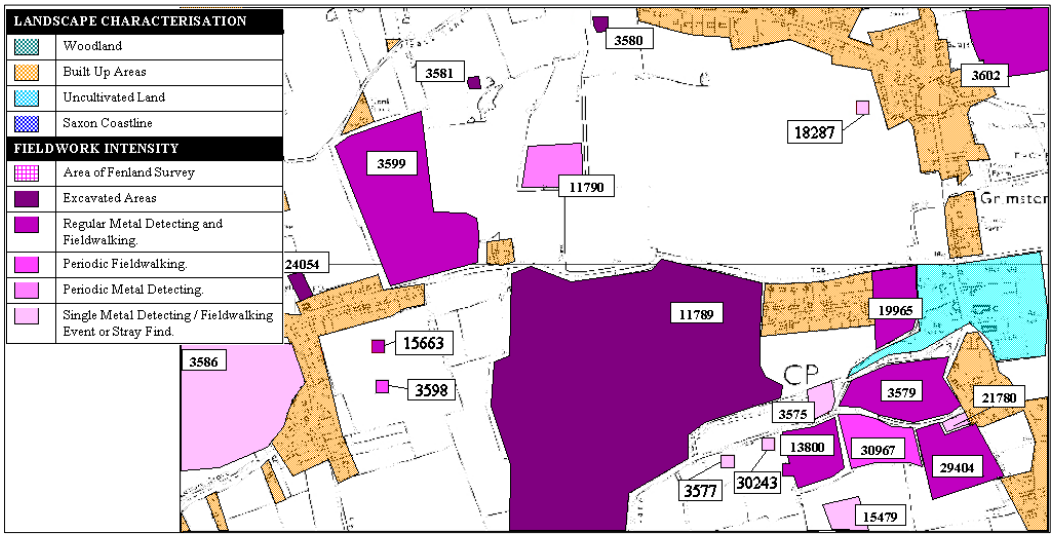



**Figure 90: Grimston HER polygons (see Figure. 91 for interpretation**). *© Crown Copyright/database right 2010. An Ordnance Survey/EDINA supplied service.*

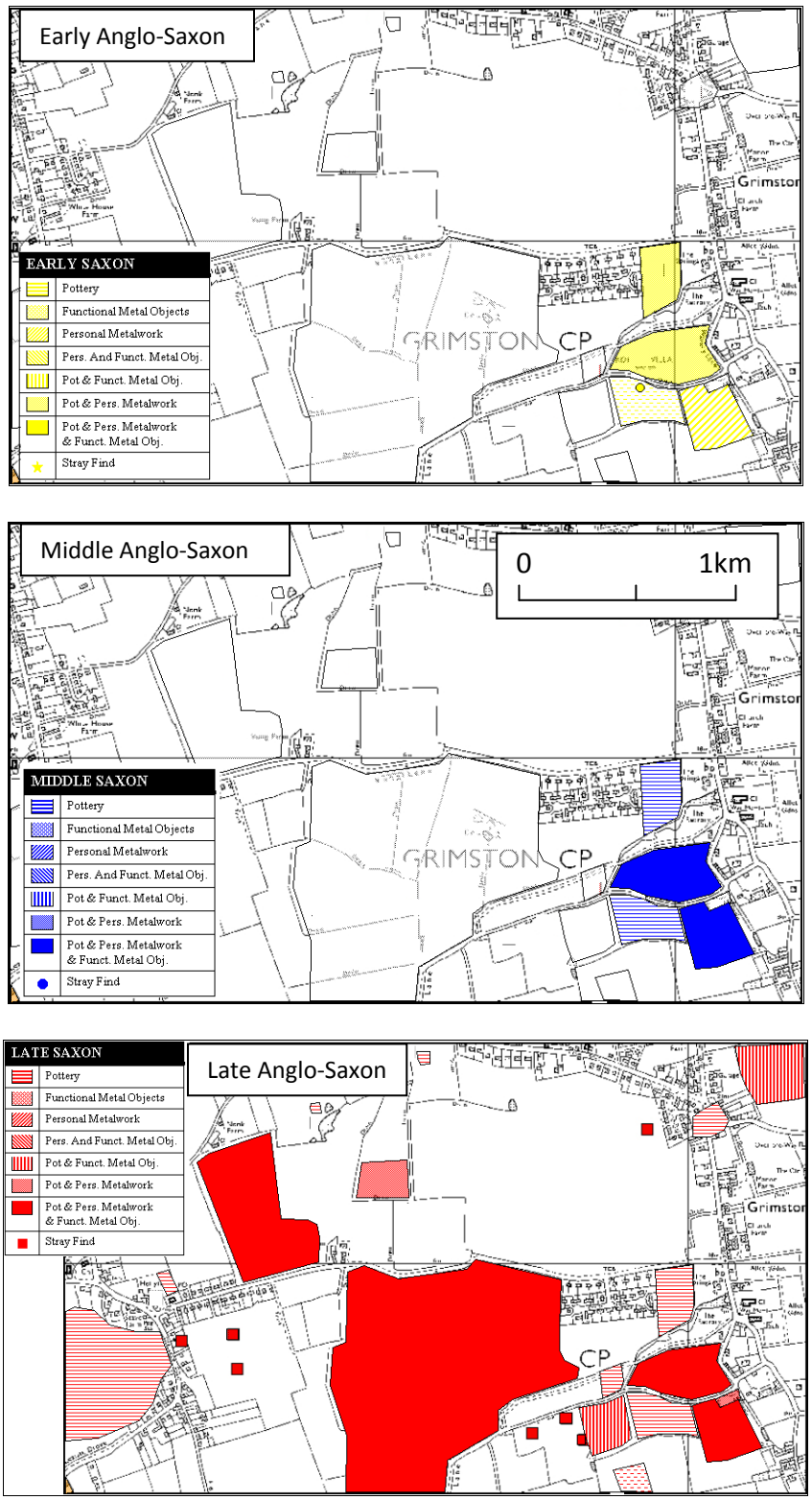



**Figure 91: Polygon analysis for Grimston**. *© Crown Copyright/database right 2010. An Ordnance Survey/EDINA supplied service*. North at top of page.

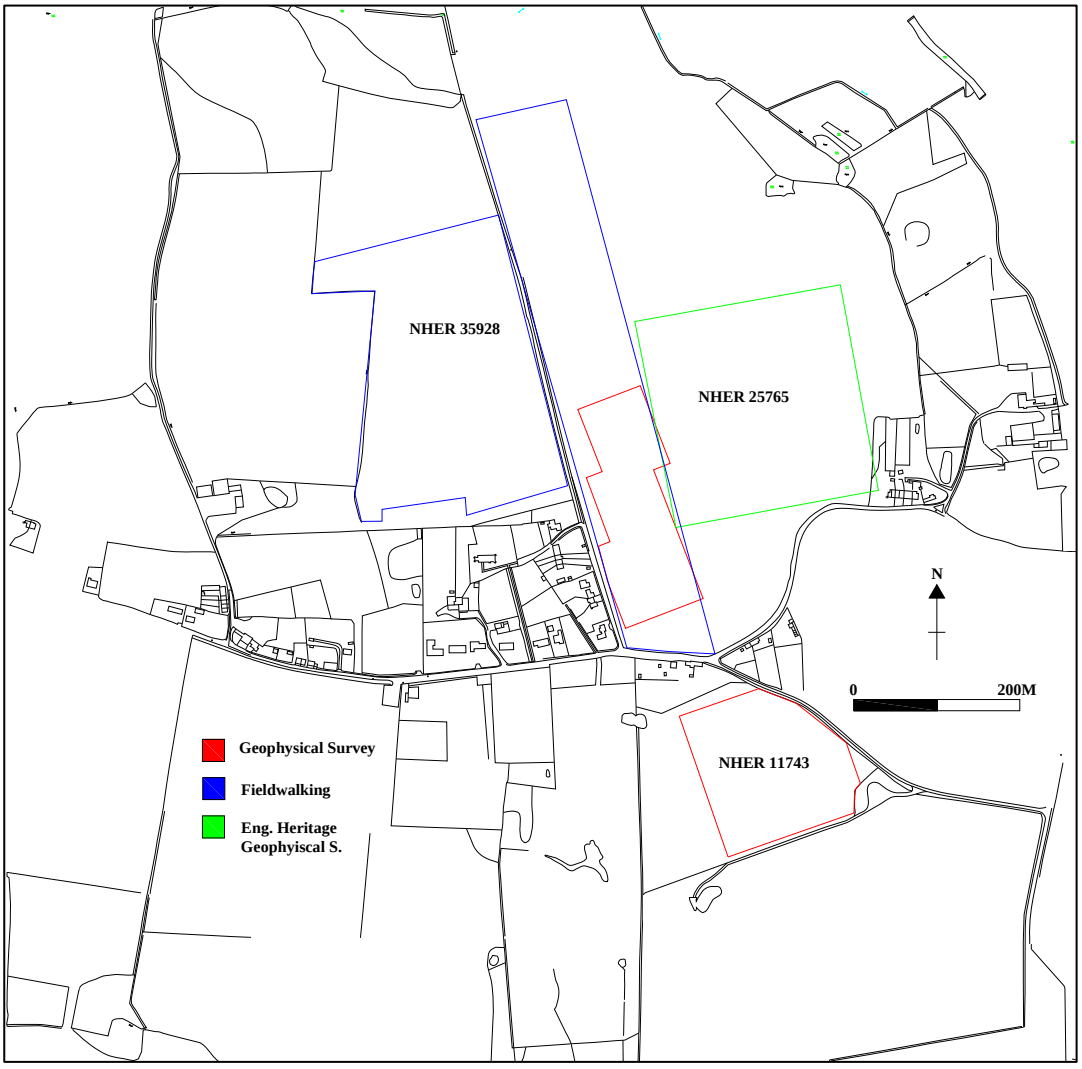



**Figure 92: Congham Overall Location, showing areas of fieldwork at Congham 'North' (NHER 25765/25928) and Congham 'South' (NHER 11743)**. *© Crown Copyright/database right 2010. An Ordnance Survey/EDINA supplied service*.

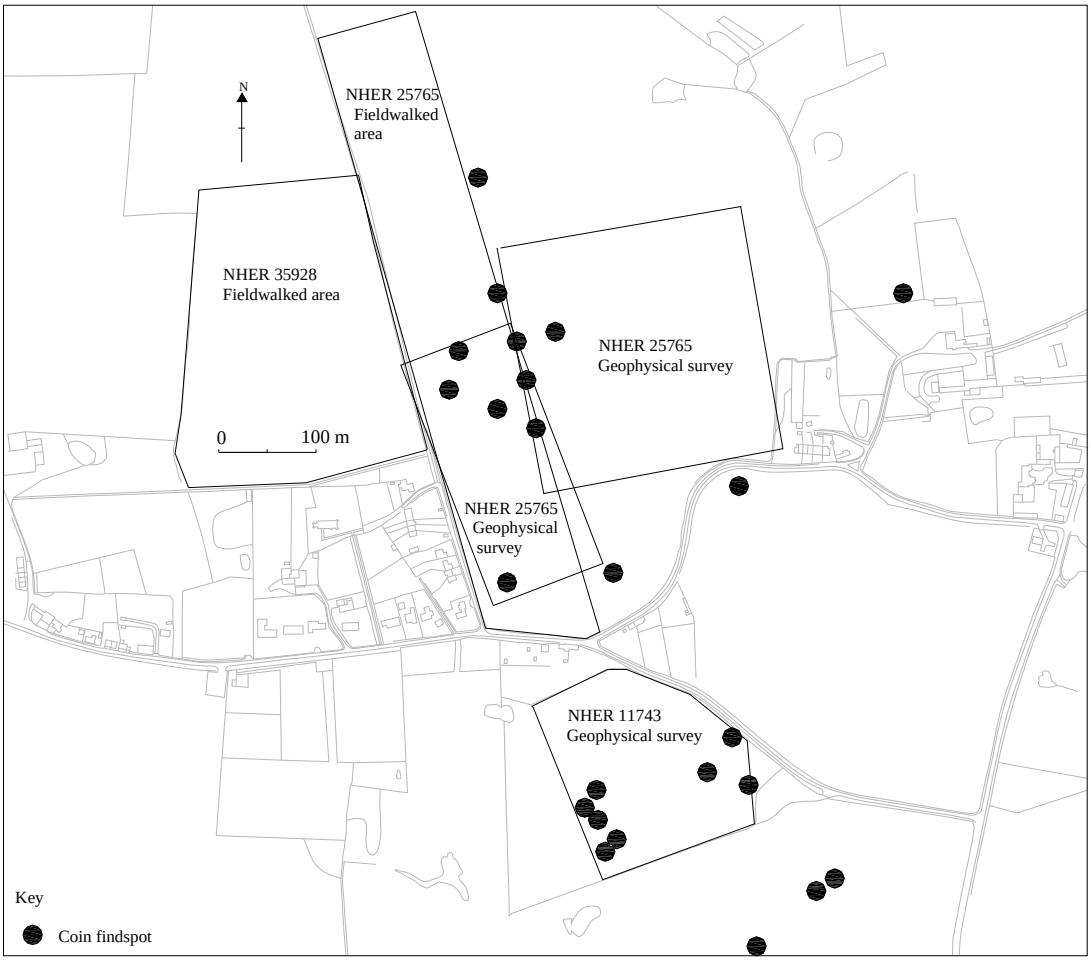



**Figure 93: Congham Overall Location, showing all located findspots of Anglo-Saxon coinage**. For other metal finds see Figure 98. *© Crown Copyright/database right 2010. An Ordnance Survey/EDINA supplied service*.

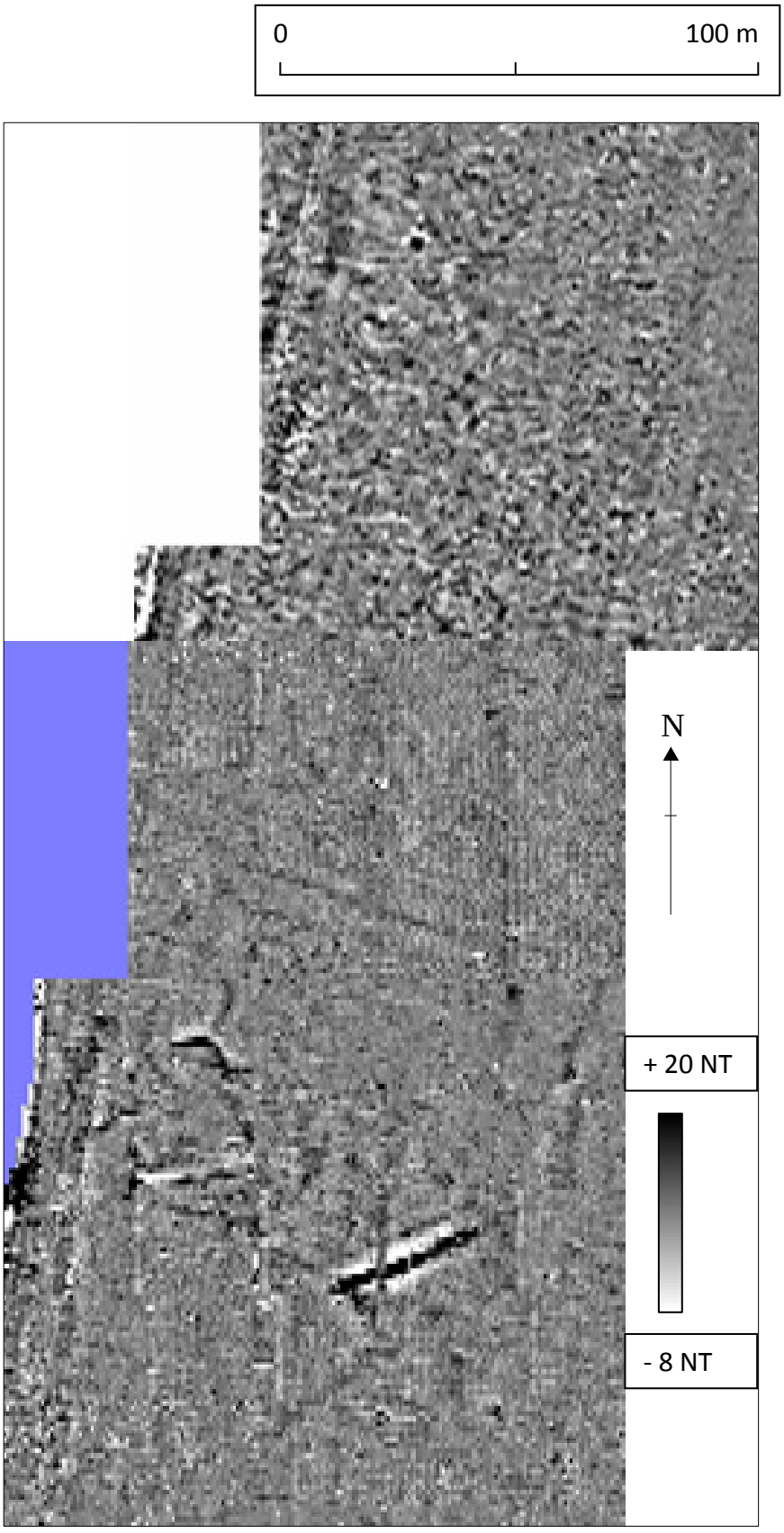



**Figure 94: Congham: NHER 19168 and NHER 17286: Raw interpreted Geophysical results.**

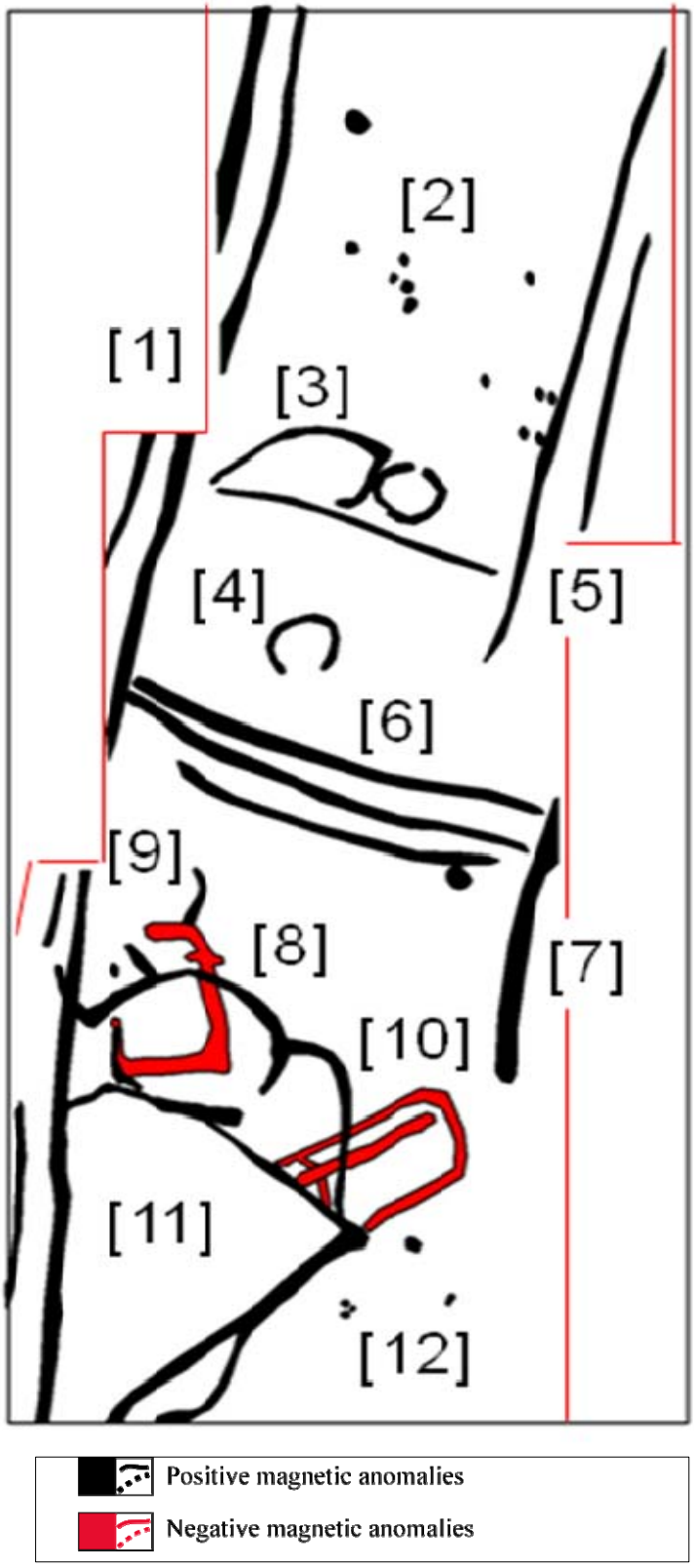



**Figure 95: Congham: NHER 25765: Interpreted Geophysical features numbered** (overlays onto Figure 94).

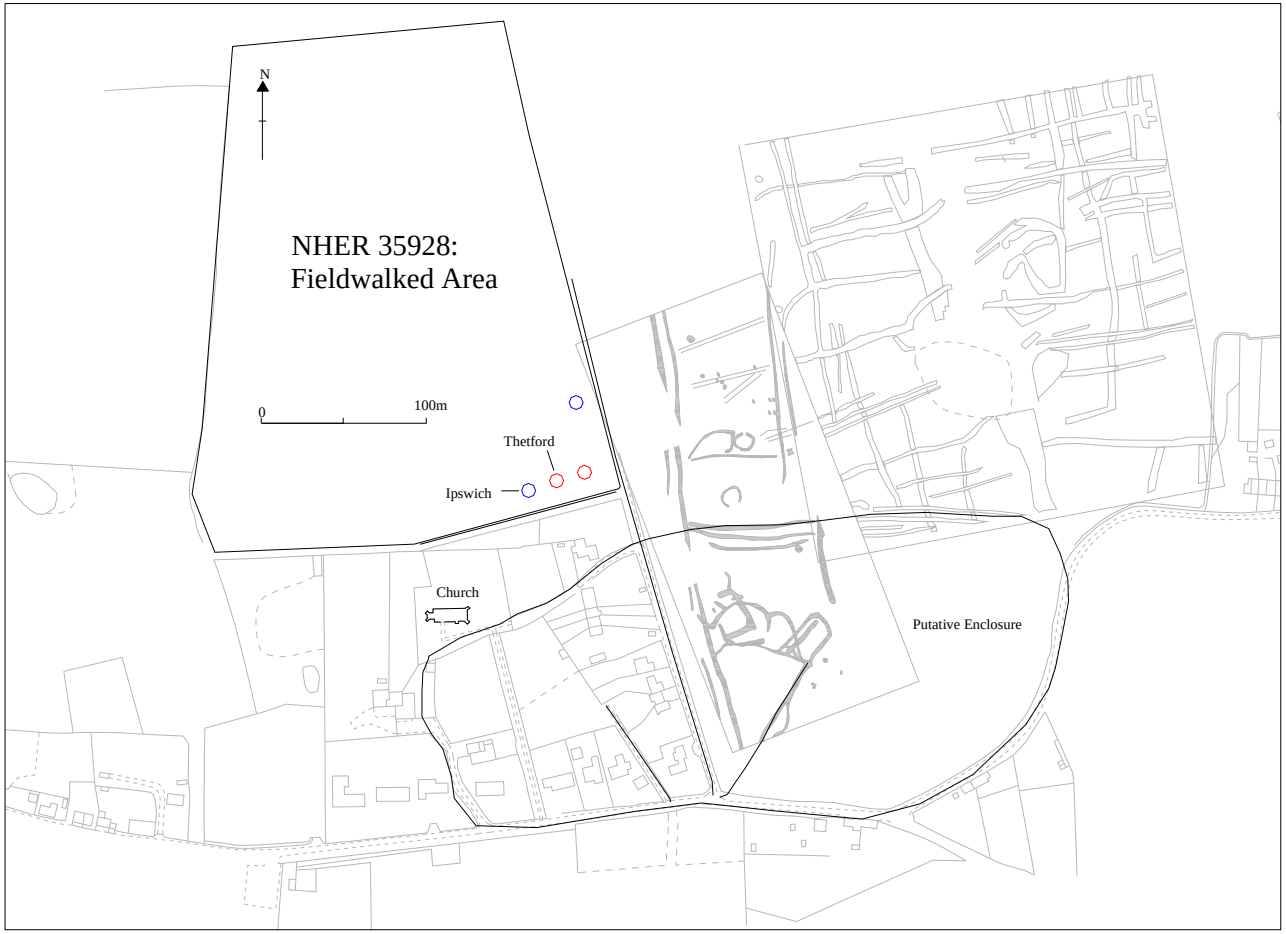
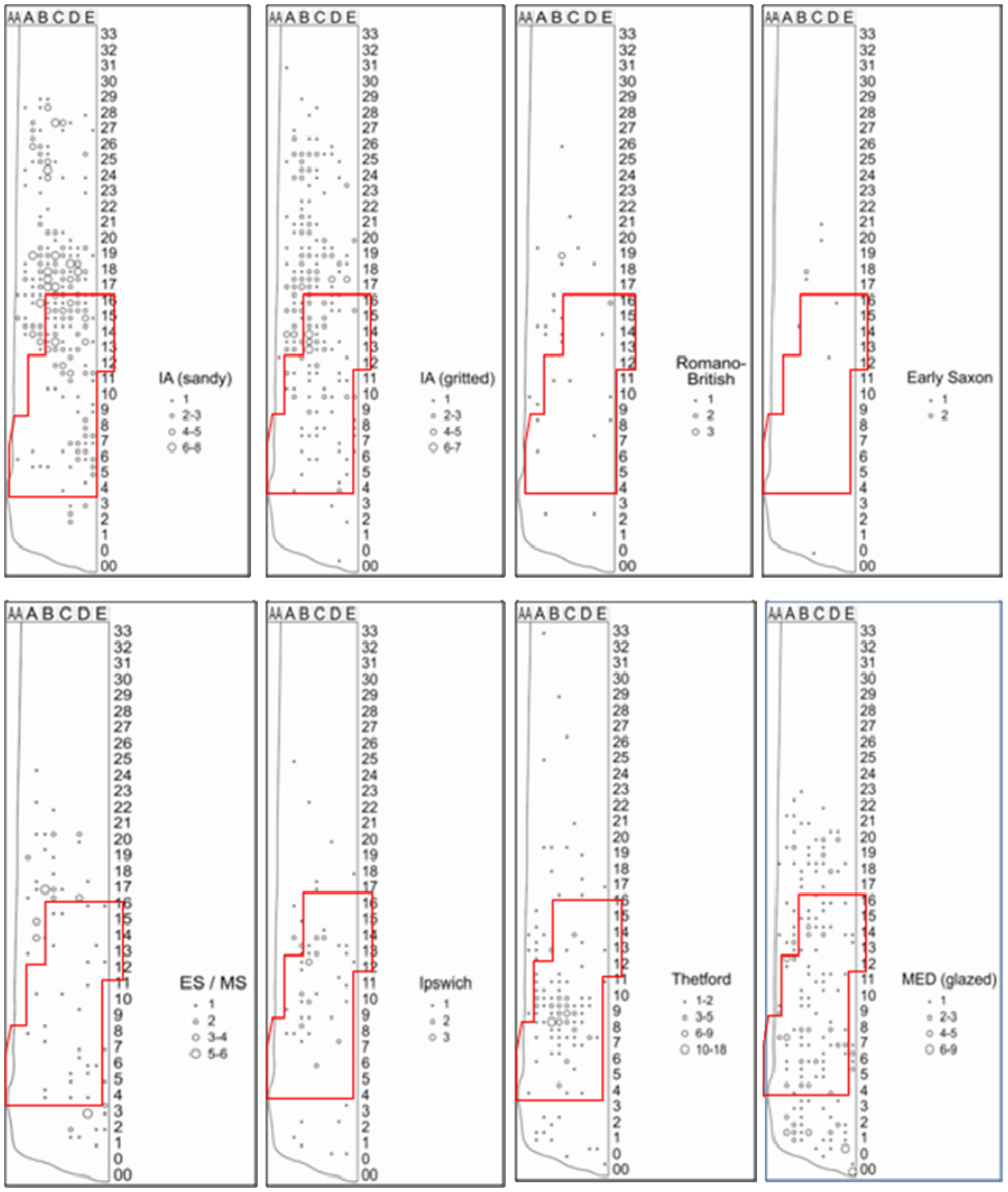



**Figure 96: Fieldwalked area in NHER 35928 and putative enclosure extrapolated from geophysical survey.**



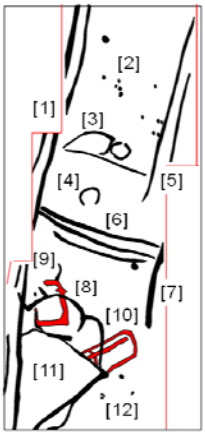




**Figure 97: Fieldwalking results by phase at NHER 25765** (above). Red area denotes limit of geophysical survey (results inset, see Figure 95 for detail).

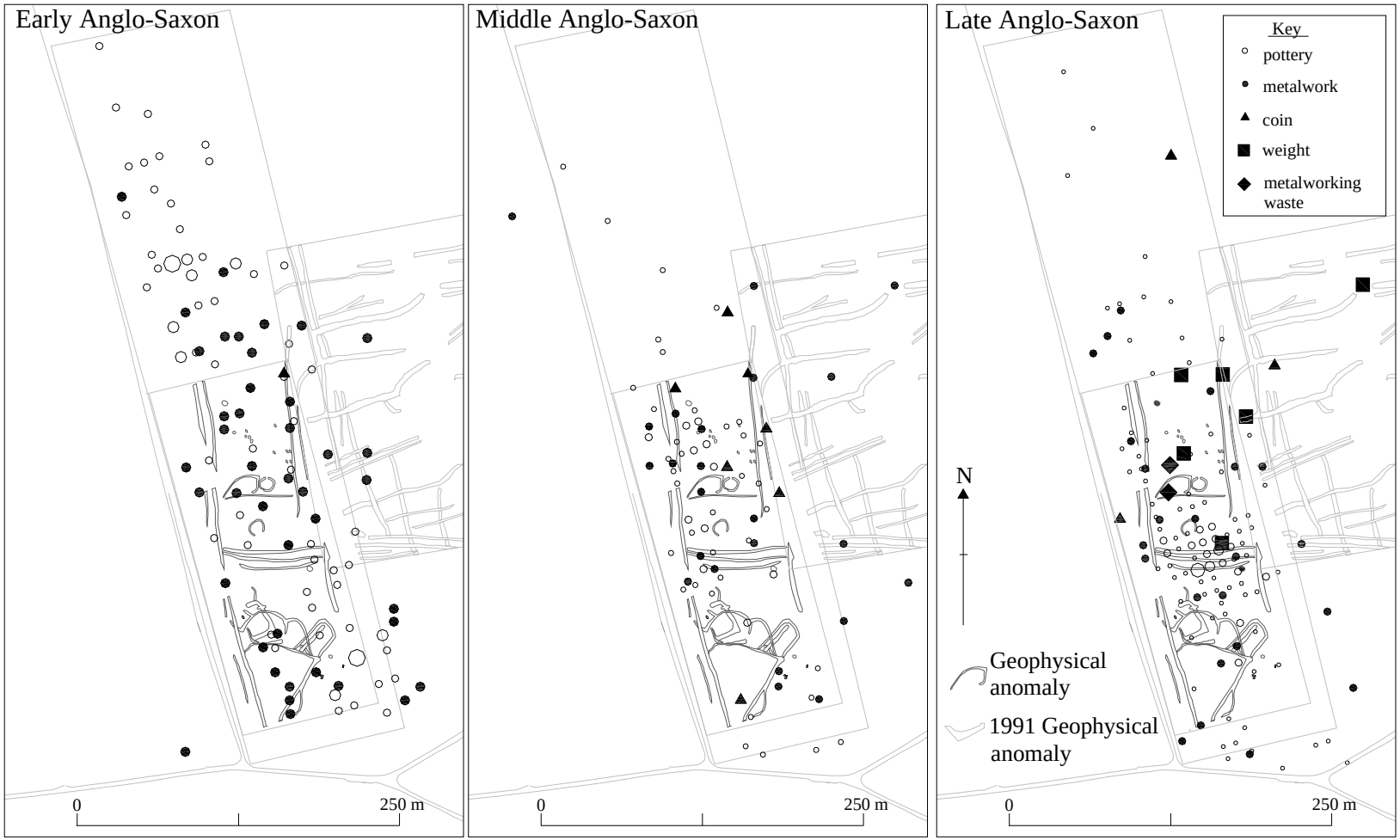



**Figure 98: Combined metalwork, pottery and geophysical survey results by period at NHER 25765.**

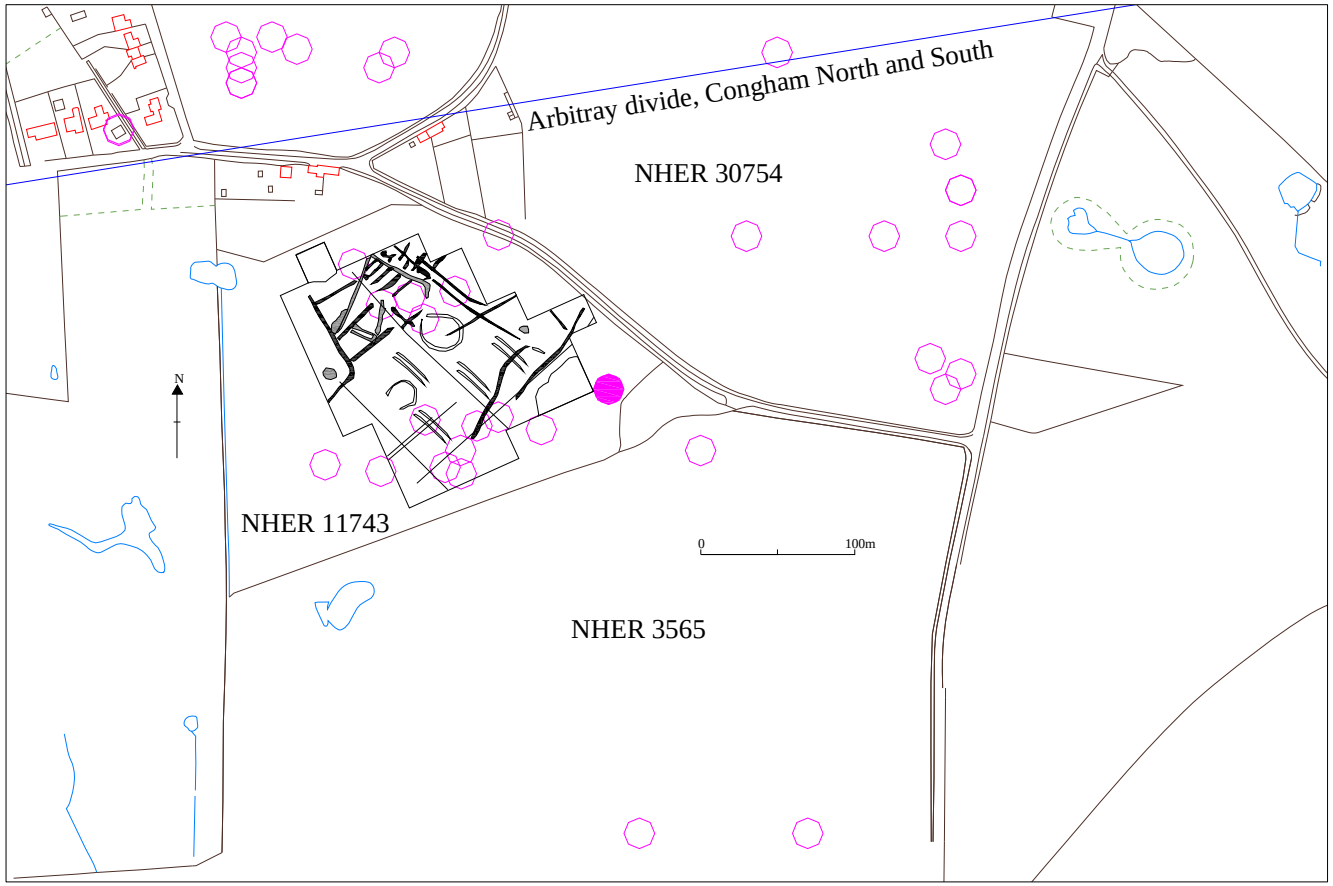



**Figure 99: Early Anglo-Saxon metalwork (circles) and coin (infilled circle) at Congham South (NHER 11743/3565).**

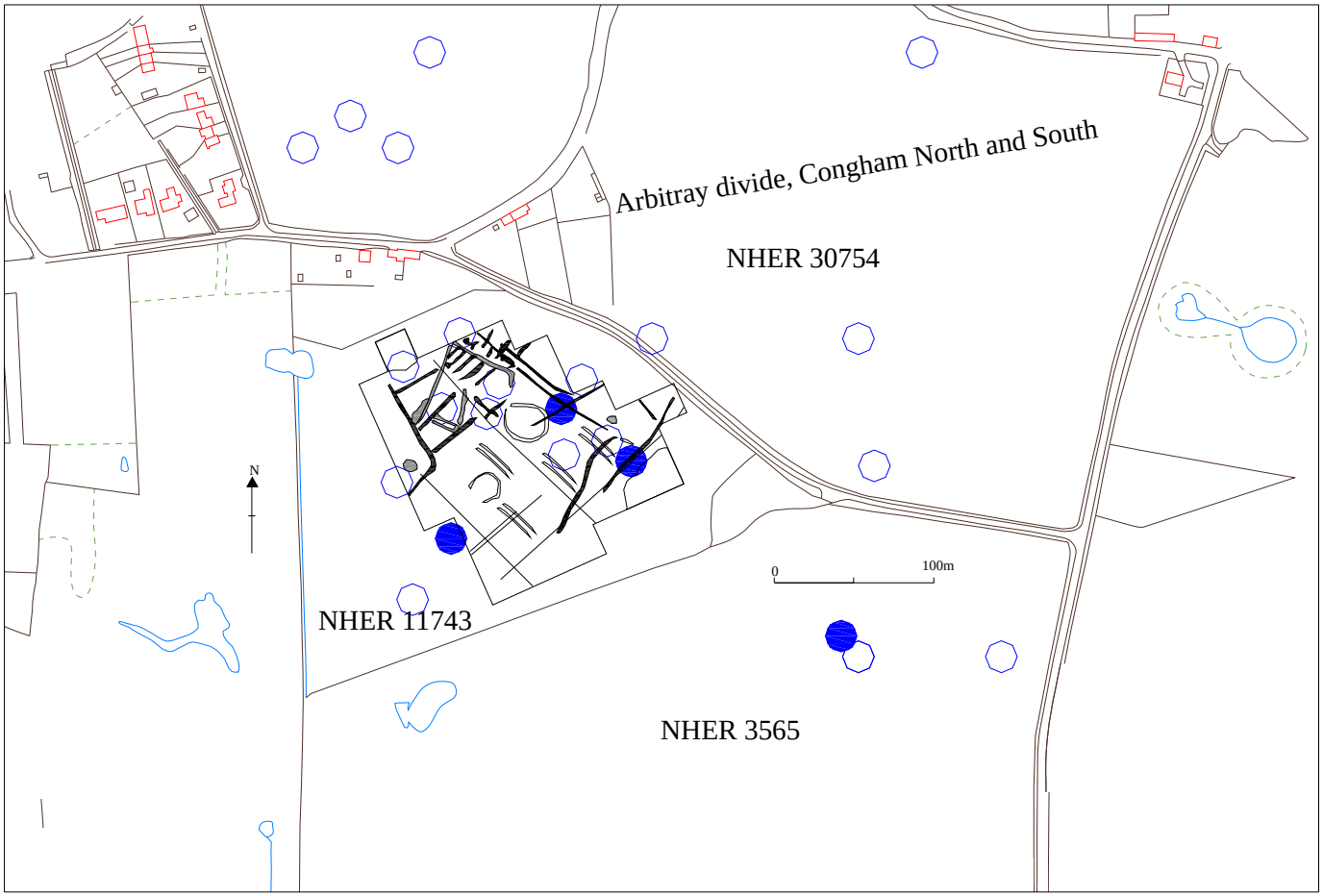



**Figure 100: Middle Anglo-Saxon metalwork (circles) and coin (infilled circles) at Congham South (NHER 11743/3565).**

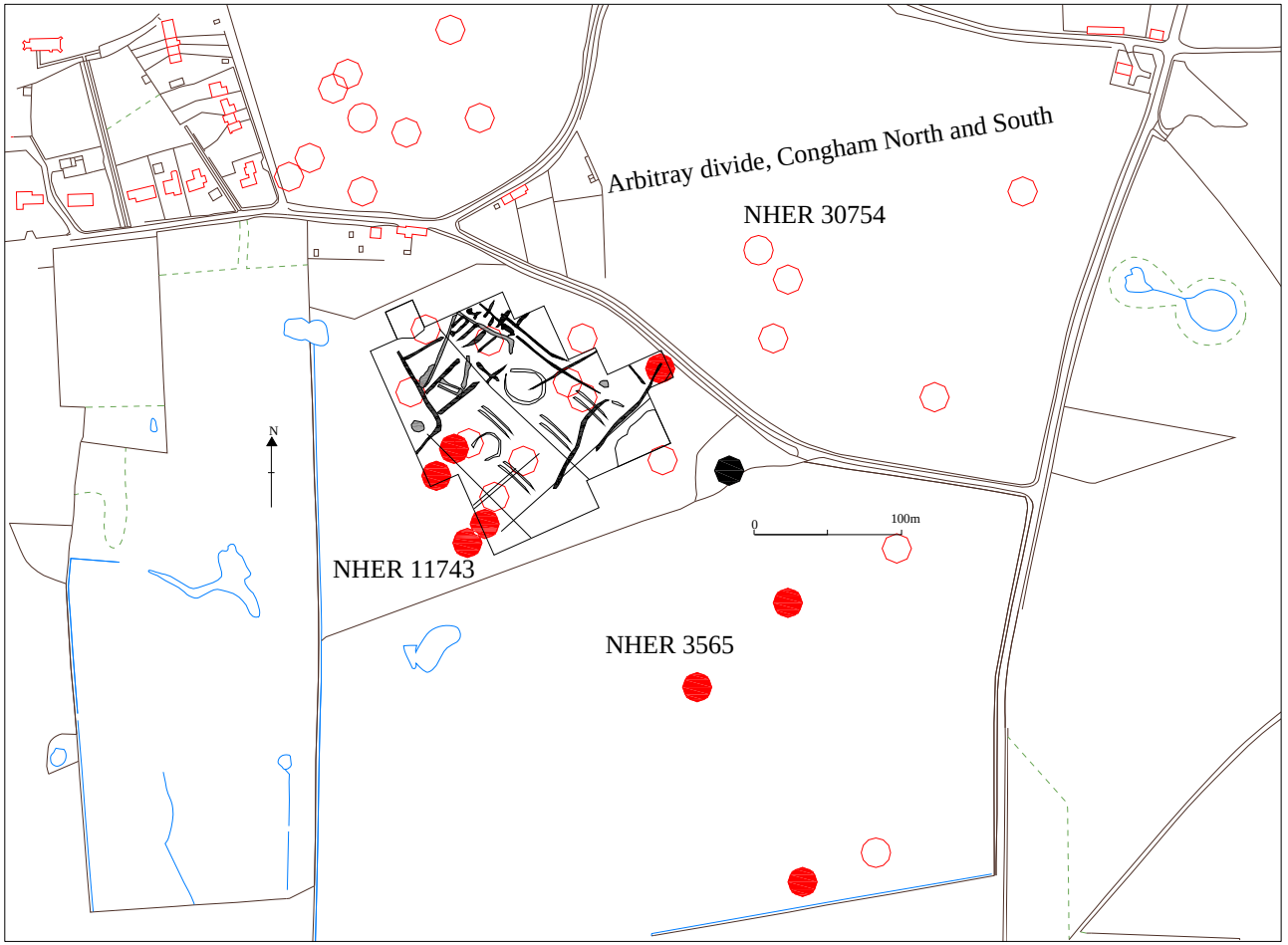



**Figure 101: Late Anglo-Saxon metalwork (circles) and coin (infilled circles) at Congham South (NHER 11743/3565).**

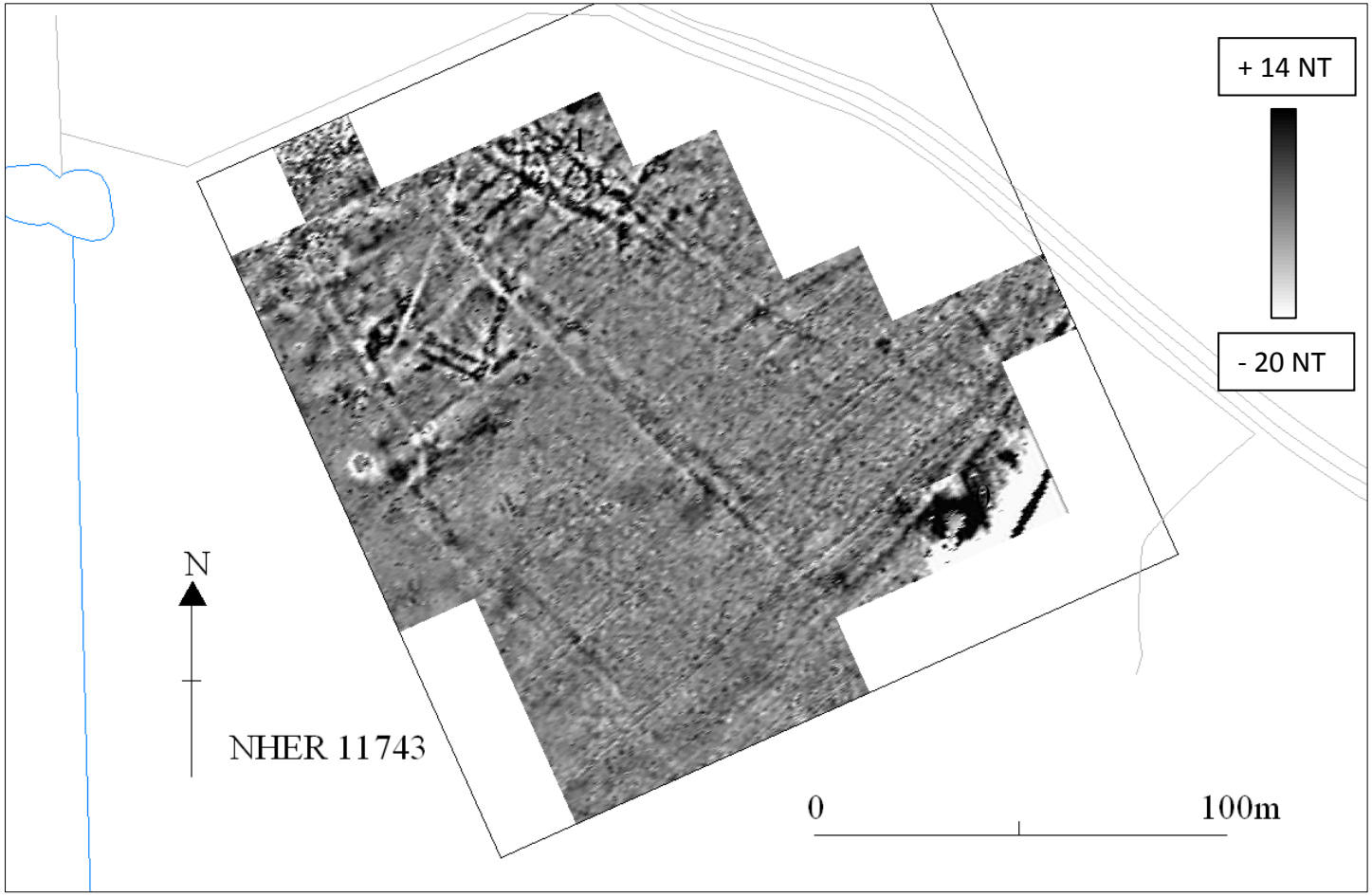



**Figure 102: Congham: NHER 11743: Raw interpreted Geophysical results.**

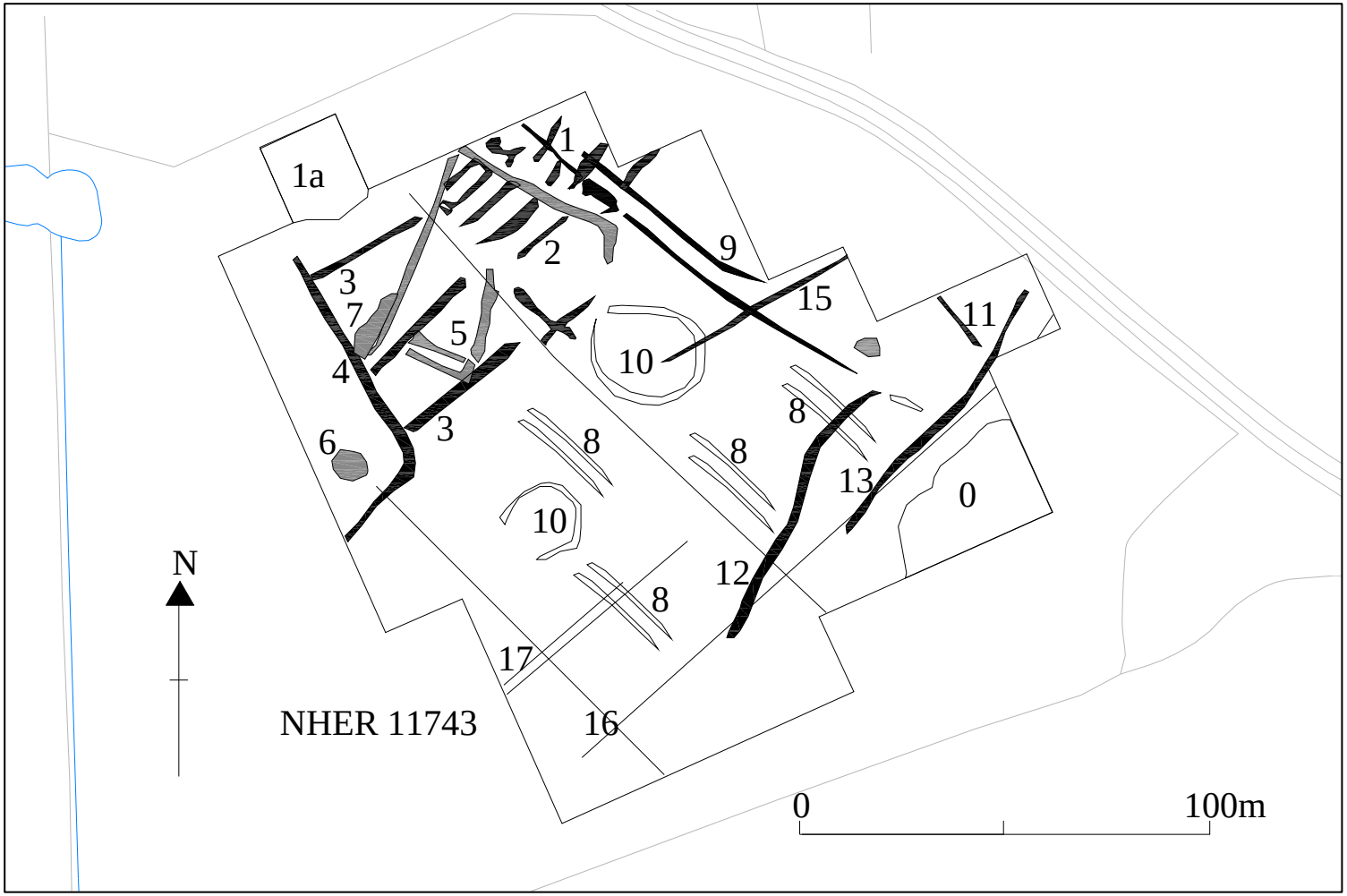



**Figure 103: Congham: NHER 11743: Interpreted Geophysical results.**

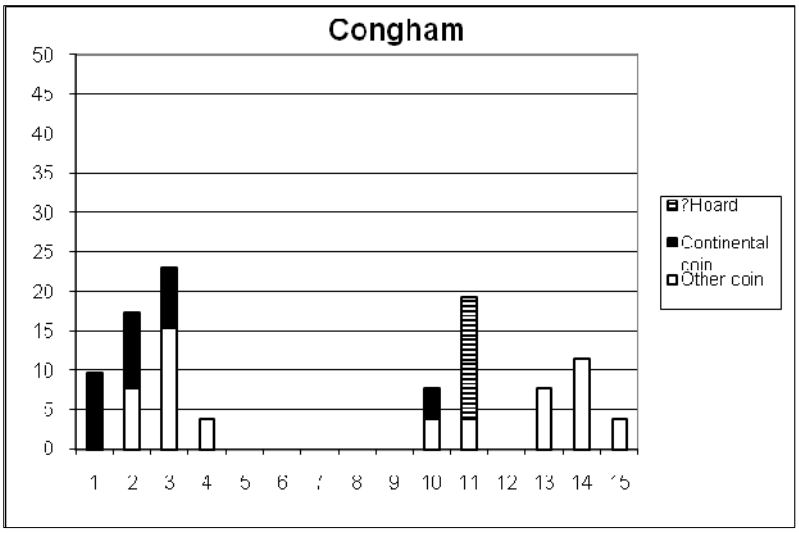
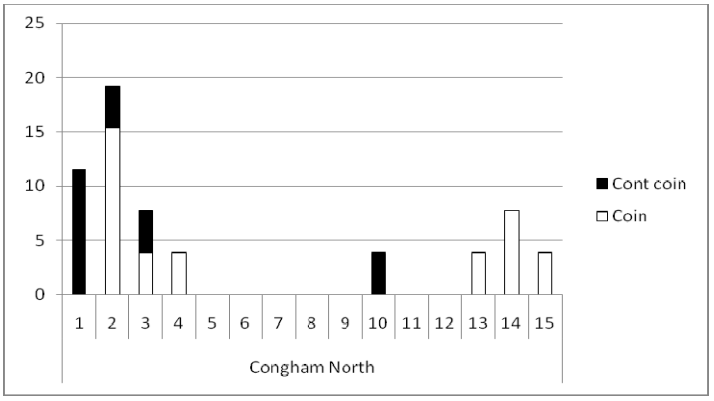



**Figure 104: Congham: Proportions of coinage (percentage) by date group and source**. Coin group dates (adapted after Naylor 2007, new groups in italics): **1** pre-680; **2** c 680–710; **3** c710–40; **4** c 740–60; **5** c 760–90; **6** c 790–810; **7** 810–40; **8** c 840–55; **9** 855-70**;** ***10*** *870–900;* ***11*** *900–30;* ***12*** *930-60;* ***13*** *960-90;* ***14*** *990-1020****; 15*** *1020-50* (data NHER and Fitzwilliam Museum Online Corpus).



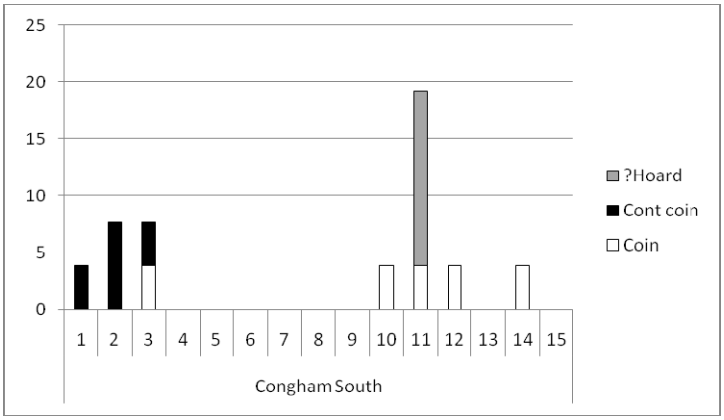




**Figure 105: Proportion of coin loss (percentage) by date group and source for Congham North and Congham South.** Coin group dates (adapted after Naylor 2007, new groups in italics): **1** pre-680; **2** c 680–710; **3** c710–40; **4** c 740–60; **5** c 760–90; **6** c 790–810; **7** 810–40; **8** c 840–55; **9** 855-70**;** ***10*** *870–900;* ***11*** *900–30;* ***12*** *930-60;* ***13*** *960-90;* ***14*** *990-1020****; 15*** *1020-50* (data NHER and Fitzwilliam Museum Online Corpus).

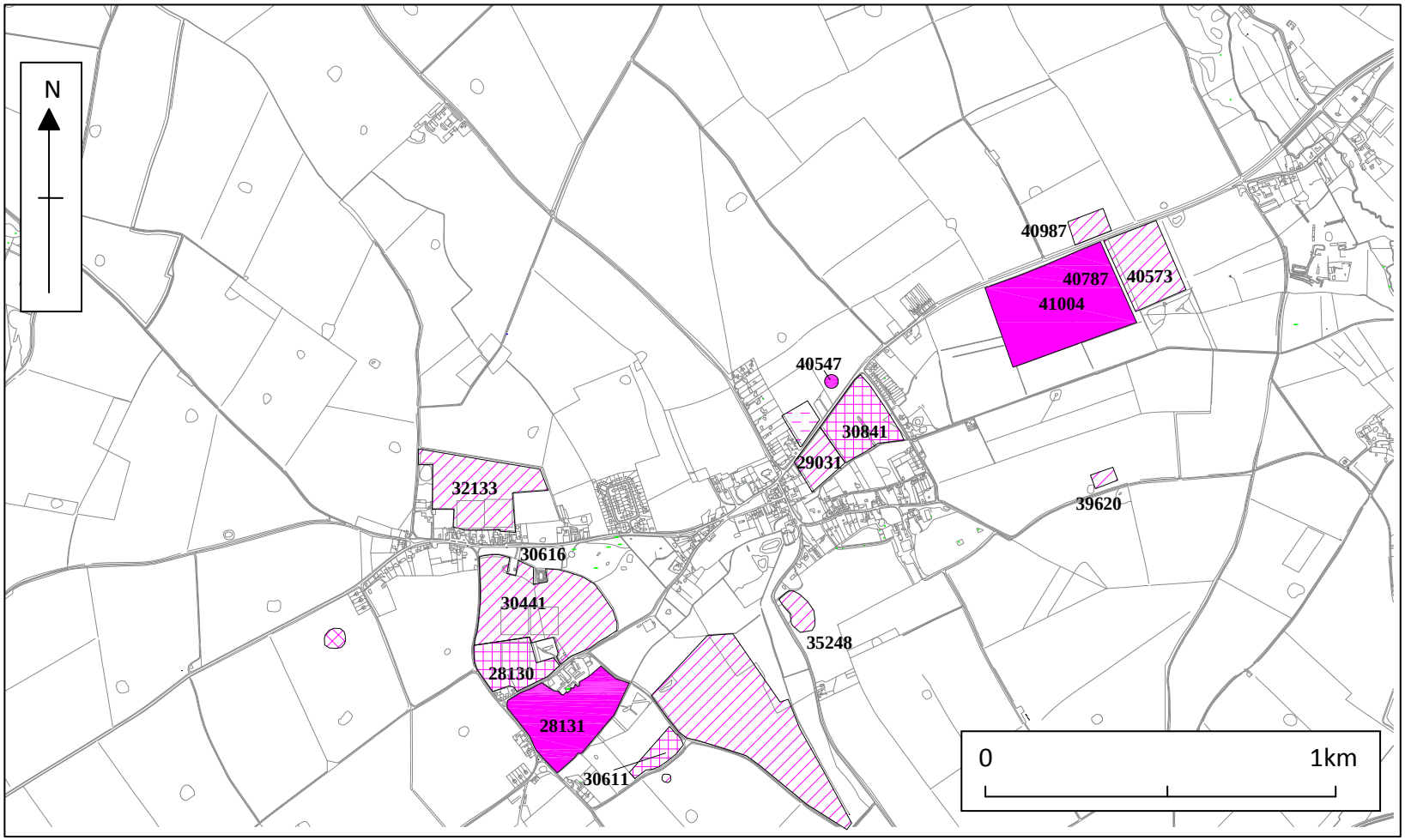



**Figure 106: Early Anglo-Saxon polygon analysis for Rudham (for full key see Figure. 69).** *© Crown Copyright/database right 2010. An Ordnance Survey/EDINA supplied service.*

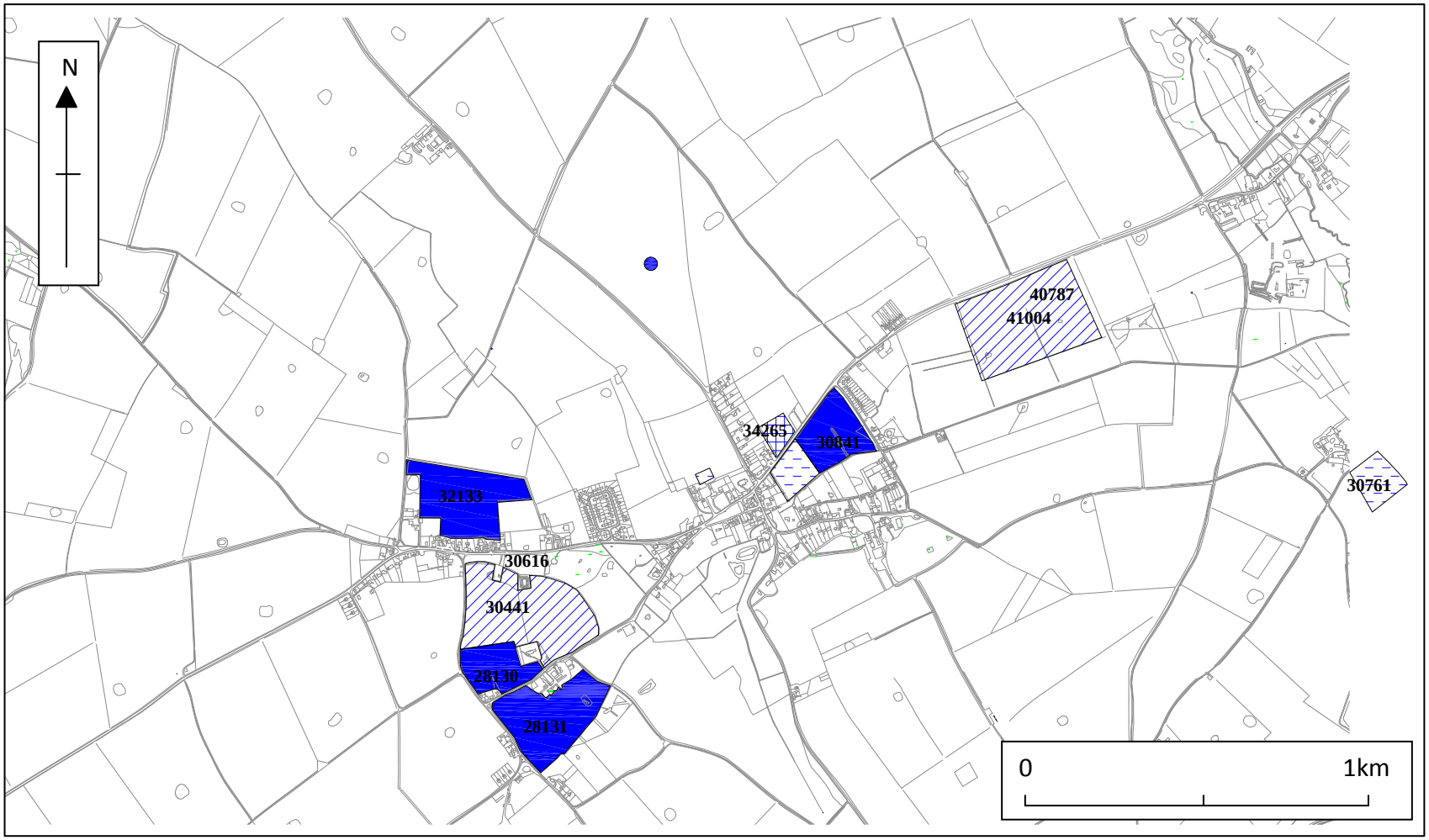



**Figure 107: Middle Anglo-Saxon polygon analysis for Rudham (for full key see Figure. 69).** *© Crown Copyright/database right 2010. An Ordnance Survey/EDINA supplied service.*

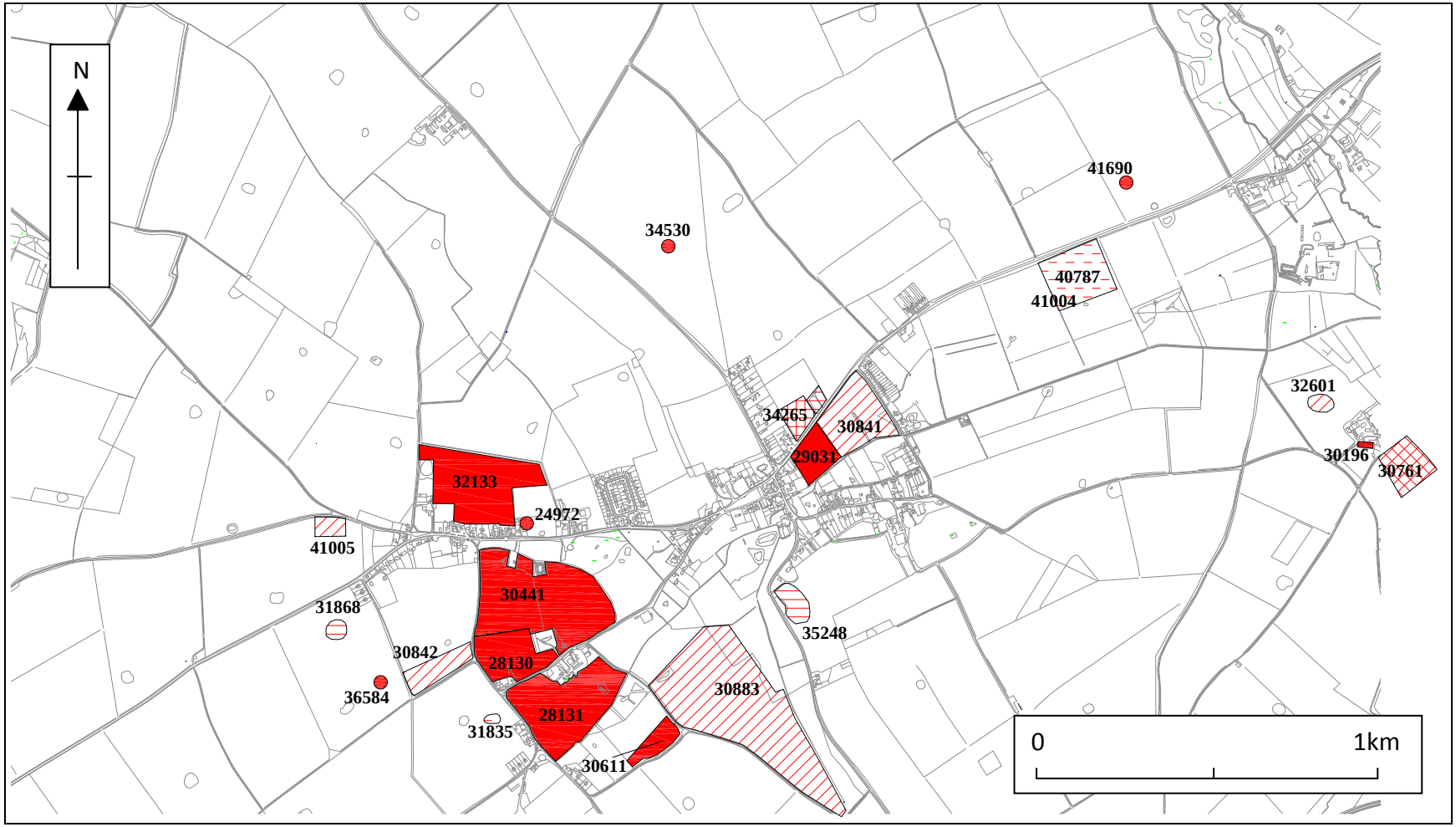



**Figure 108: Late Anglo-Saxon polygon analysis for Rudham (for full key see Figure. 69).** *© Crown Copyright/database right 2010. An Ordnance Survey/EDINA supplied service.*

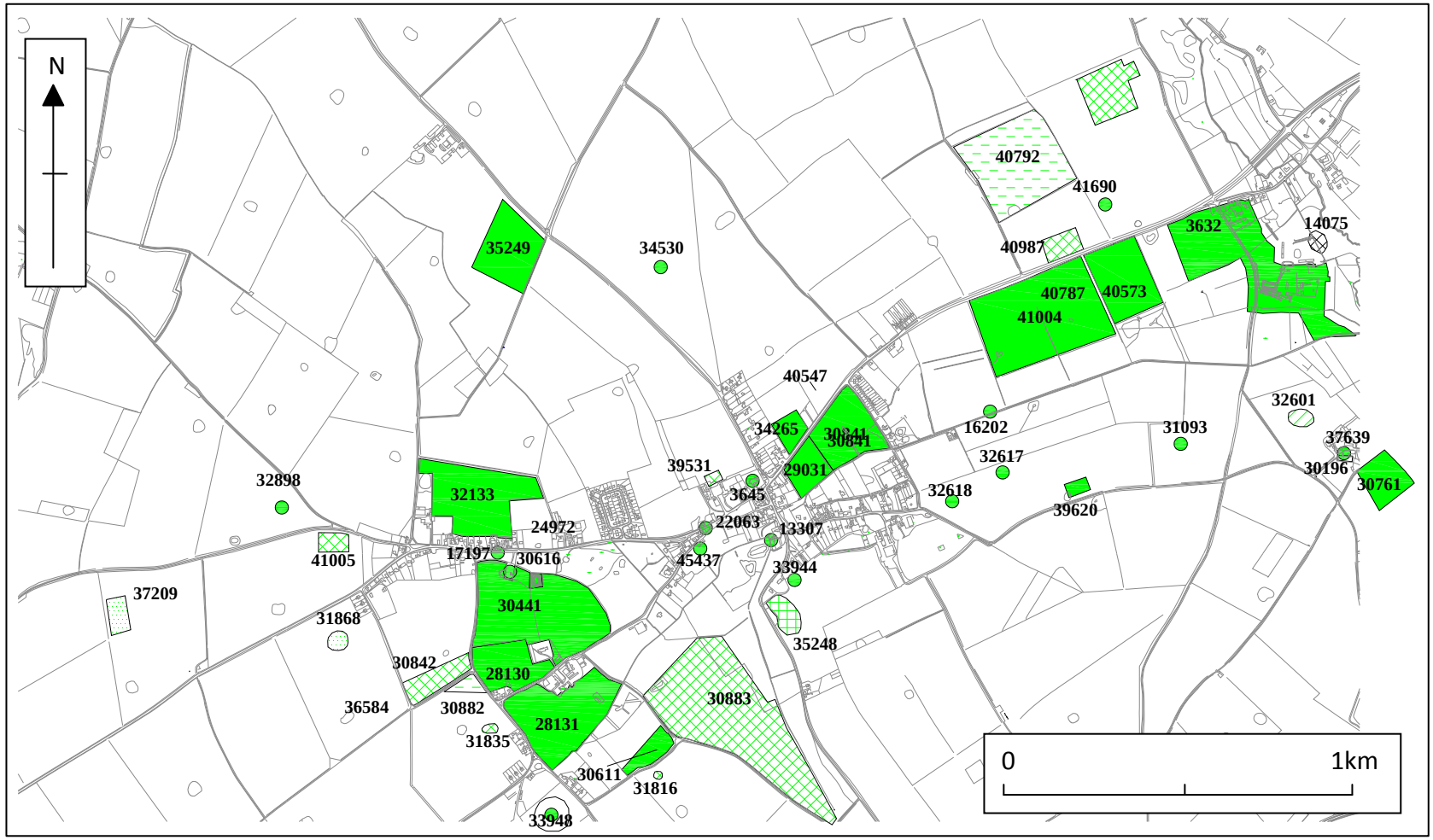



**Figure 109: Medieval polygon analysis for Rudham (for full key see Figure. 69).** *© Crown Copyright/database right 2010. An Ordnance Survey/EDINA supplied service.*

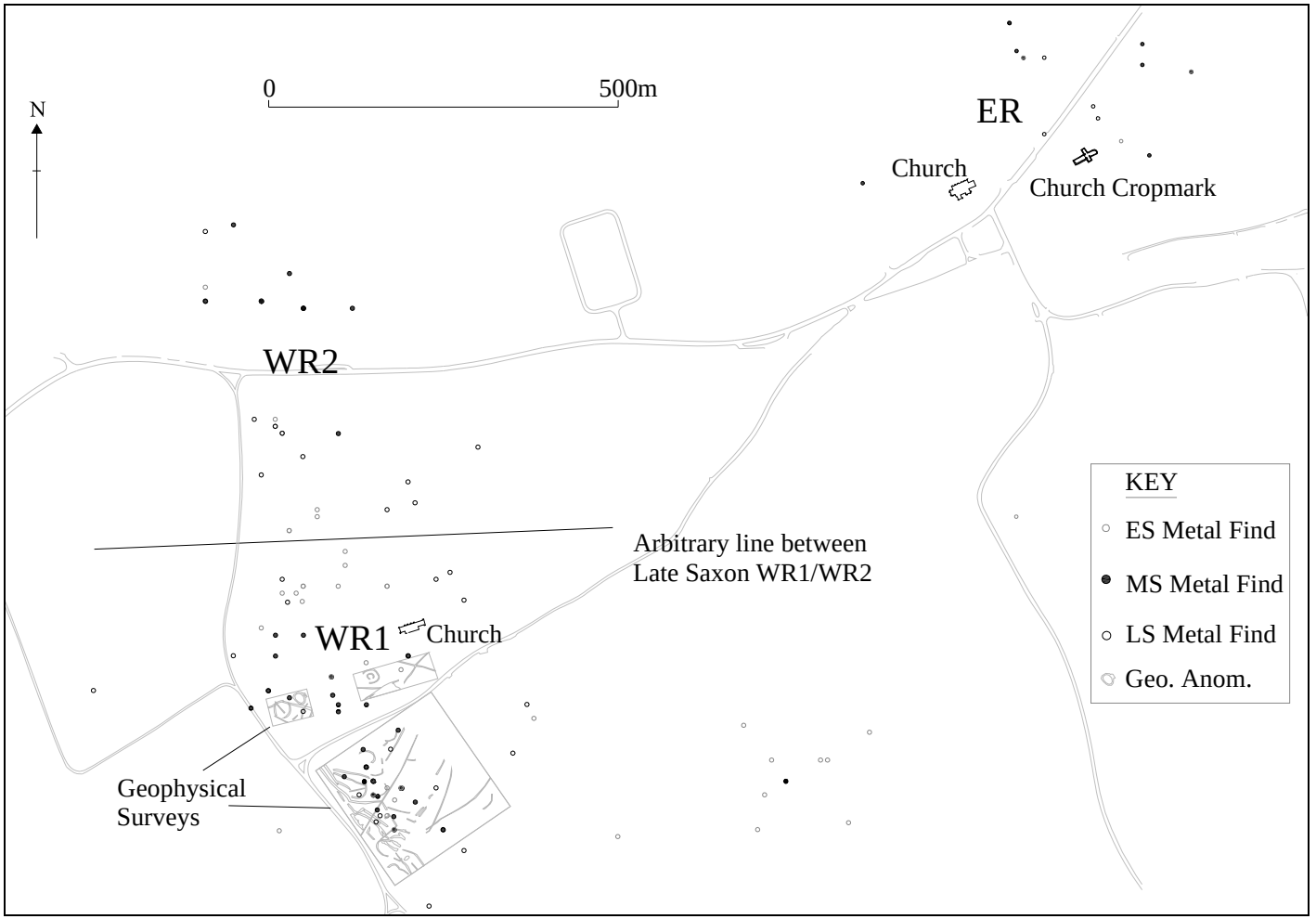



**Figure 110: Located findspots of Early, Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon metalwork from East and West Rudham. Churches and church cropmark also depicted.**

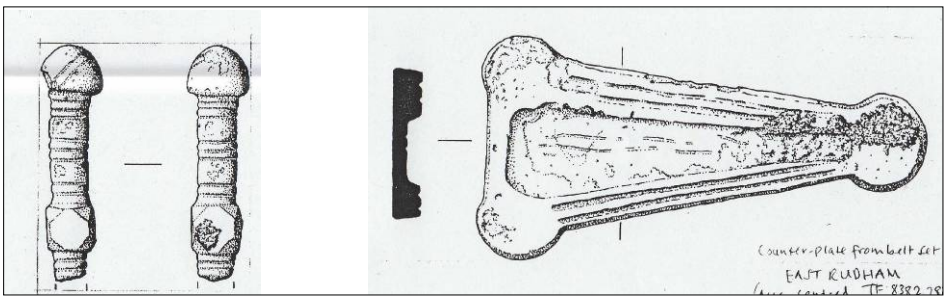



**Figure 111: Early Anglo-Saxon Frankish objects from Rudham. Belt plate (right) and pin (left) (NHER, unpublished). NHER 41004/40787.**

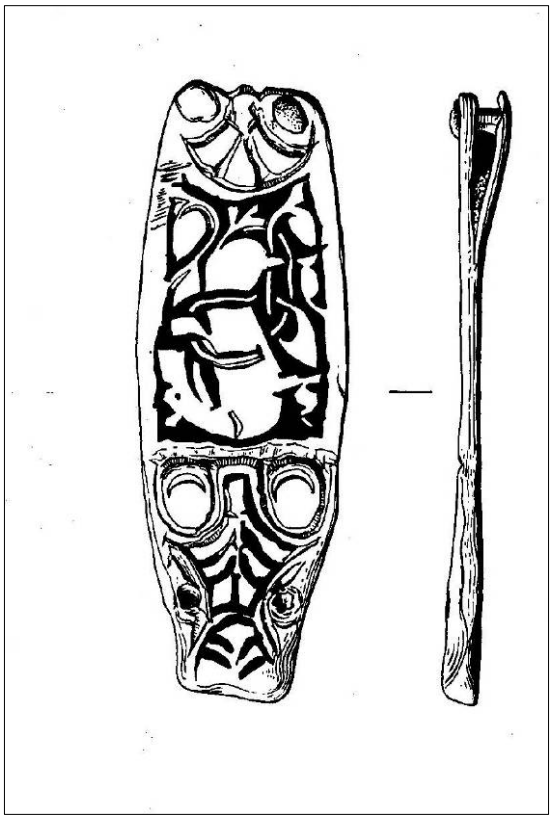


**Figure 112: Middle to Late Anglo-Saxon Trewhiddle style strap end from Rudham. (after Rogerson, 2003). NHER 28131.**

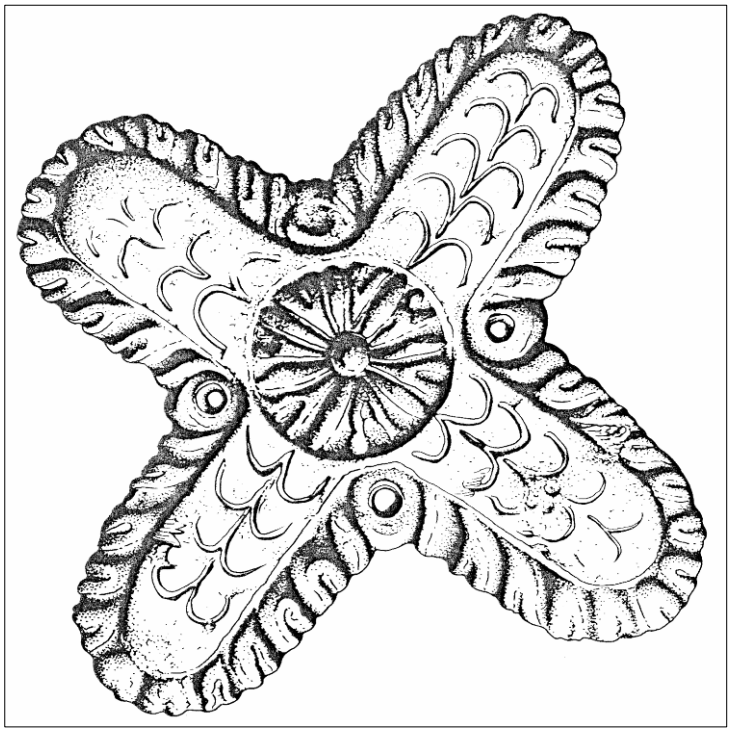


**Figure 113: Middle to Late Anglo-Saxon Carolingian strap distributor from Rudham. (after Rogerson, 2003). NHER 32133.**

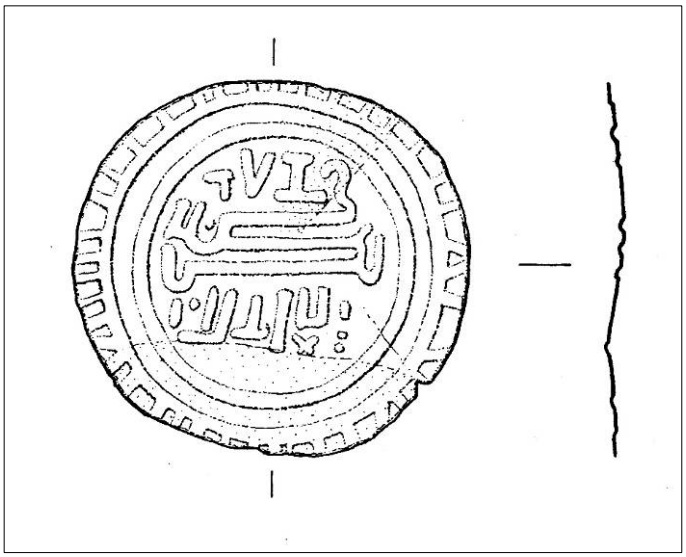


**Figure 114: Late Anglo-Saxon nummular brooch in imitation of Arabic Dirham. (NHER unpublished). NHER 32133.**

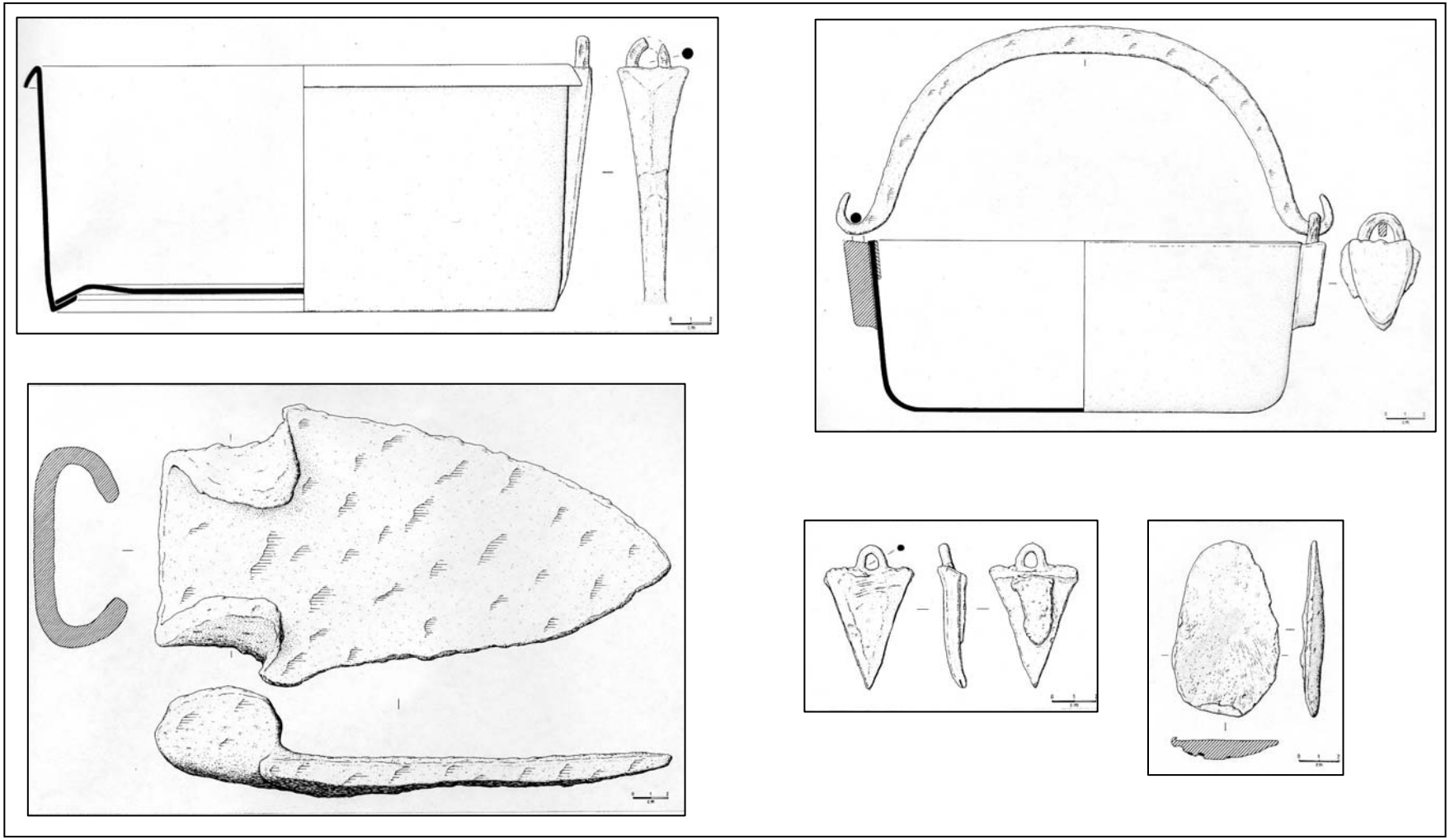


**Figure 115: Lead and Iron hoard from West Rudham (NHER 32133). (NHER unpublished)**

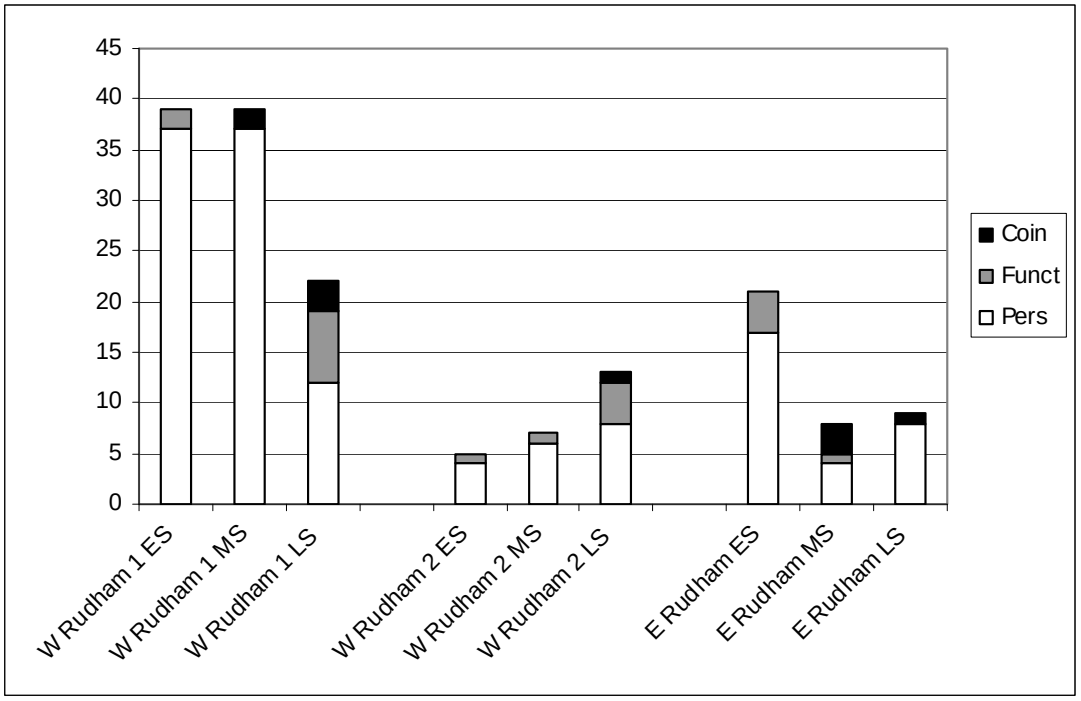



**Figure 116: Metalwork and coin loss compared at proposed Rudham activity foci (percentage of finds).**

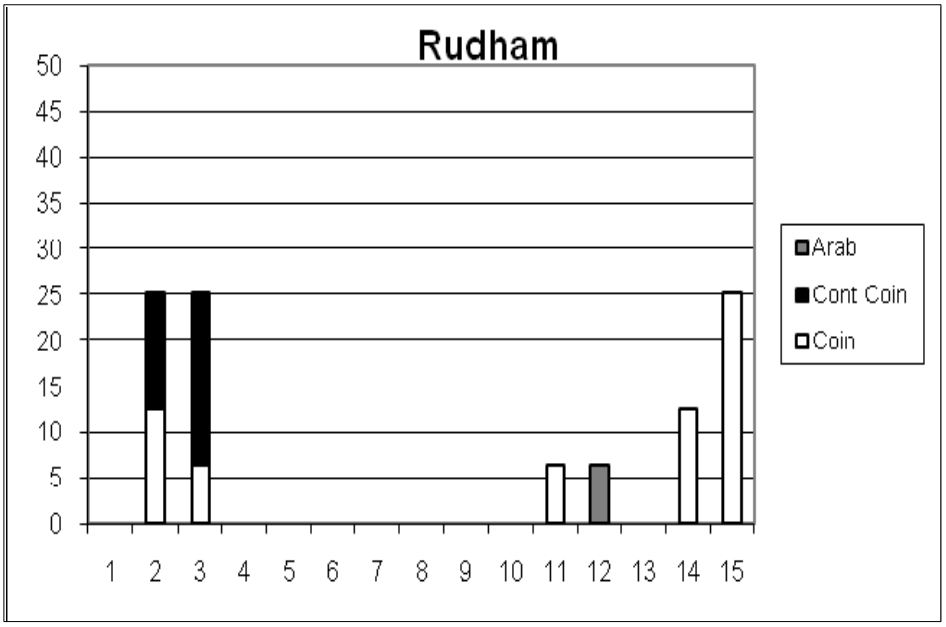



**Figure 117: Rudham: Coin loss (percentage) by date group and source.** Coin group dates (adapted after Naylor 2007, new groups in italics): **1** pre-680; **2** c 680–710; **3** c710–40; **4** c 740–60; **5** c 760–90; **6** c 790–810; **7** 810–40; **8** c 840–55; **9** 855-70**;** ***10*** *870–900;* ***11*** *900–30;* ***12*** *930-60;* ***13*** *960-90;* ***14*** *990-1020****;*** ***15*** *1020-50* (data NHER and Fitzwilliam Museum Online Corpus).


**Figure 118: West Rudham: Observed Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon pottery concentrations (red outline, unpublished HER data), against all located metal finds and geophysical data.**

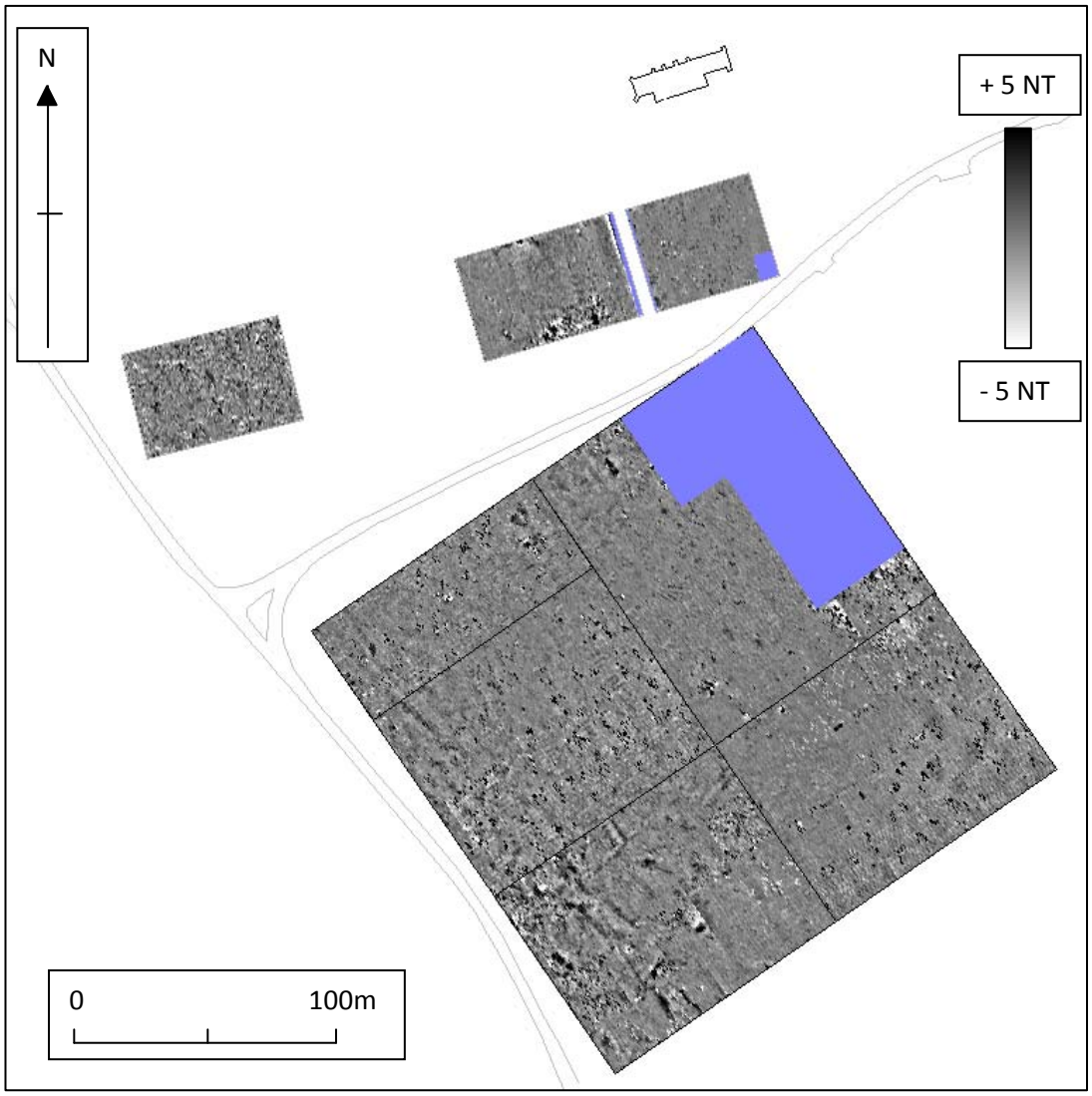



**Figure 119: Interpreted raw geophysical results for West Rudham.**

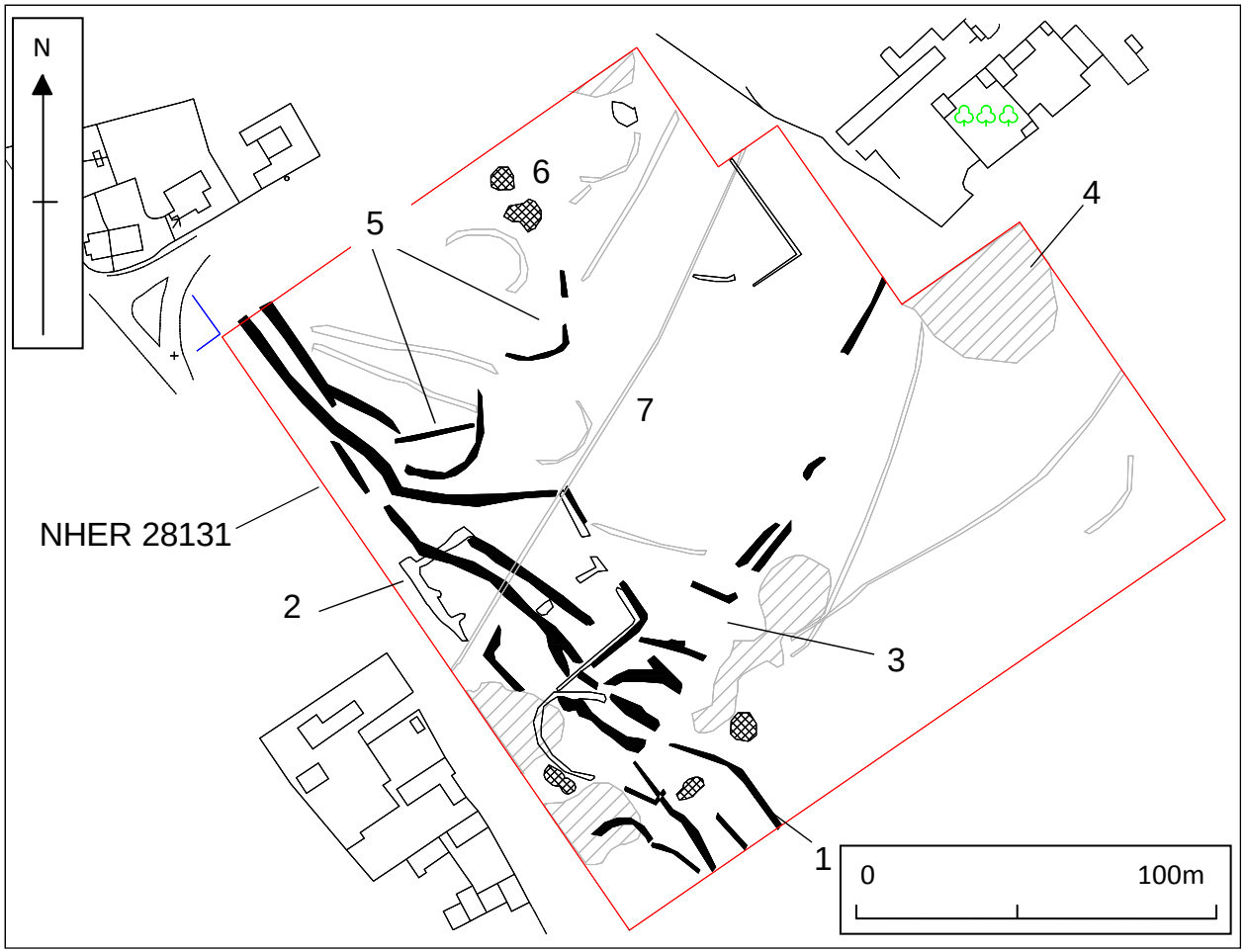



**Figure 120: Interpreted and numbered geophysical results for West Rudham (NHER 28131).**

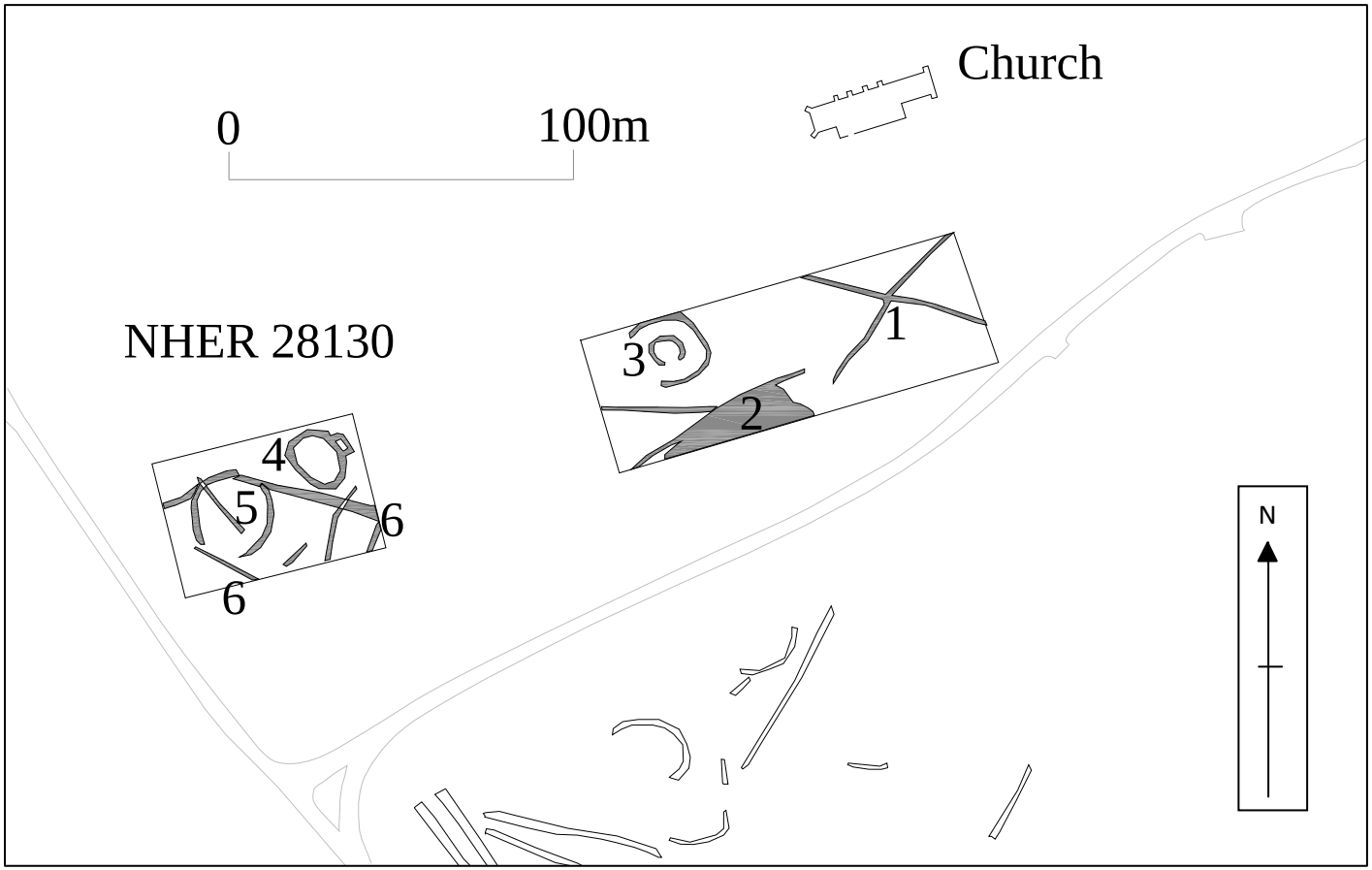



**Figure 121: Interpreted geophysical results for West Rudham (NHER 28130).**

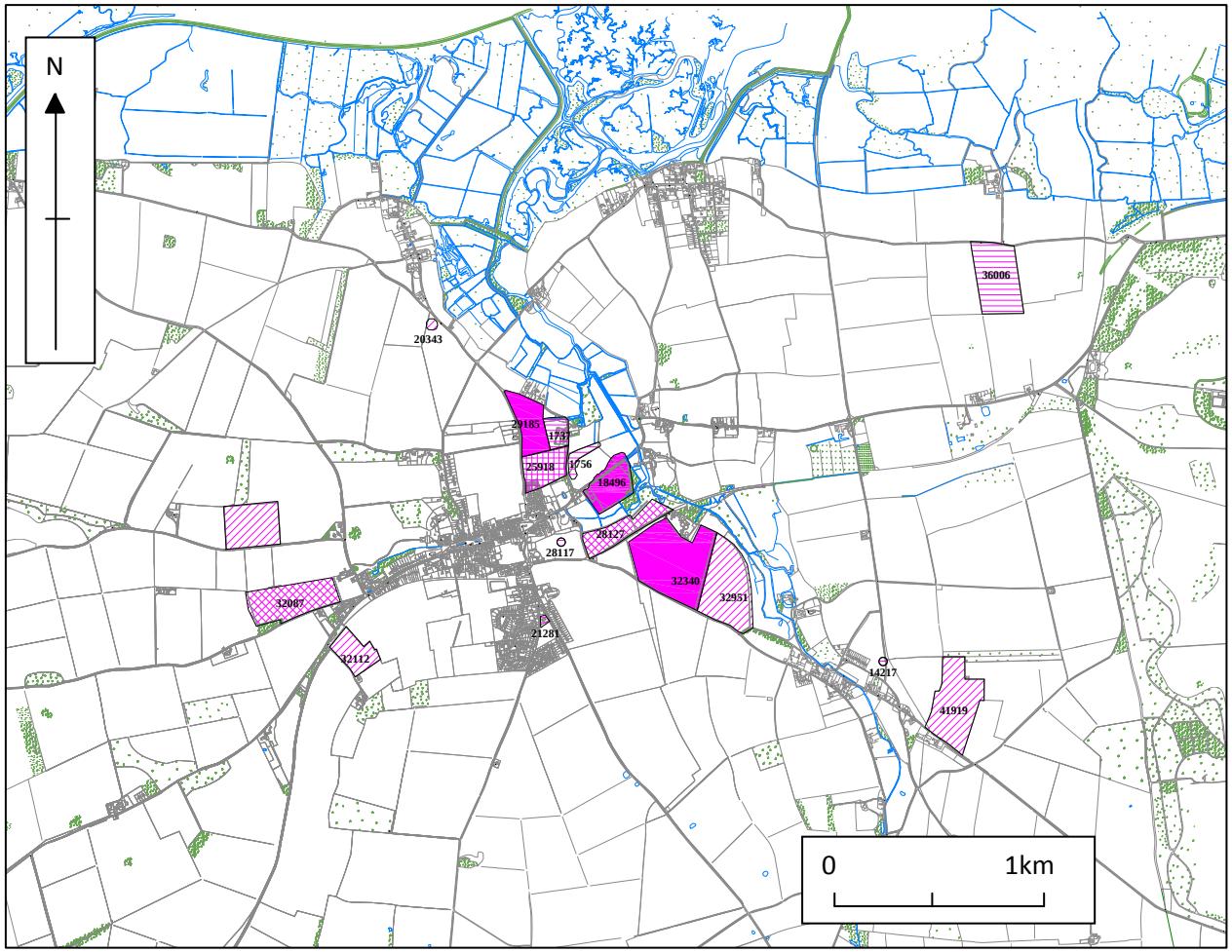



**Figure 122: Early Anglo-Saxon polygon analysis for Burnham (for full key see Figure. 69).** *© Crown Copyright/database right 2010. An Ordnance Survey/EDINA supplied service.*

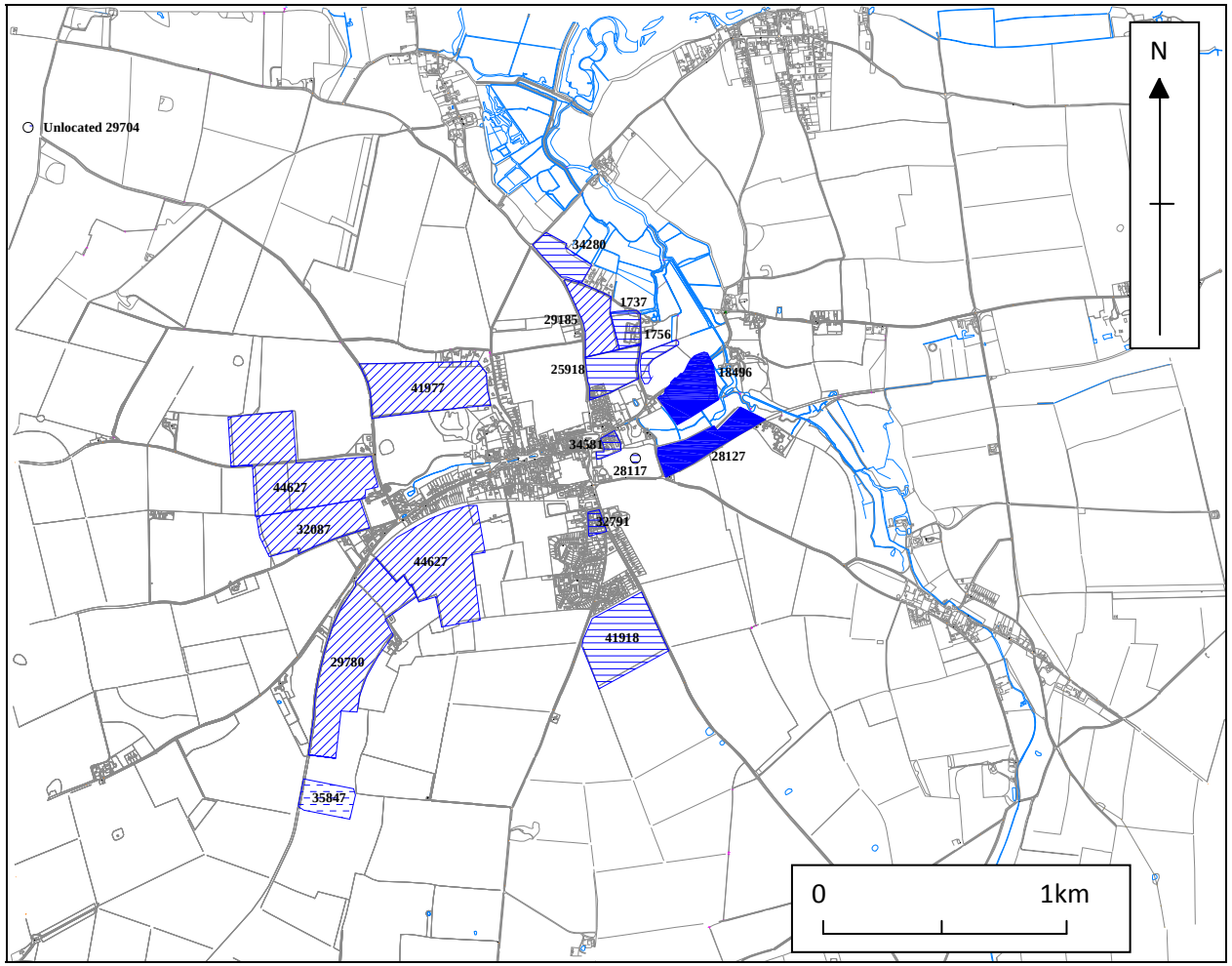



**Figure 123: Middle Anglo-Saxon polygon analysis for Burnham (for full key see Figure. 69).** *© Crown Copyright/database right 2010. An Ordnance Survey/EDINA supplied service.*

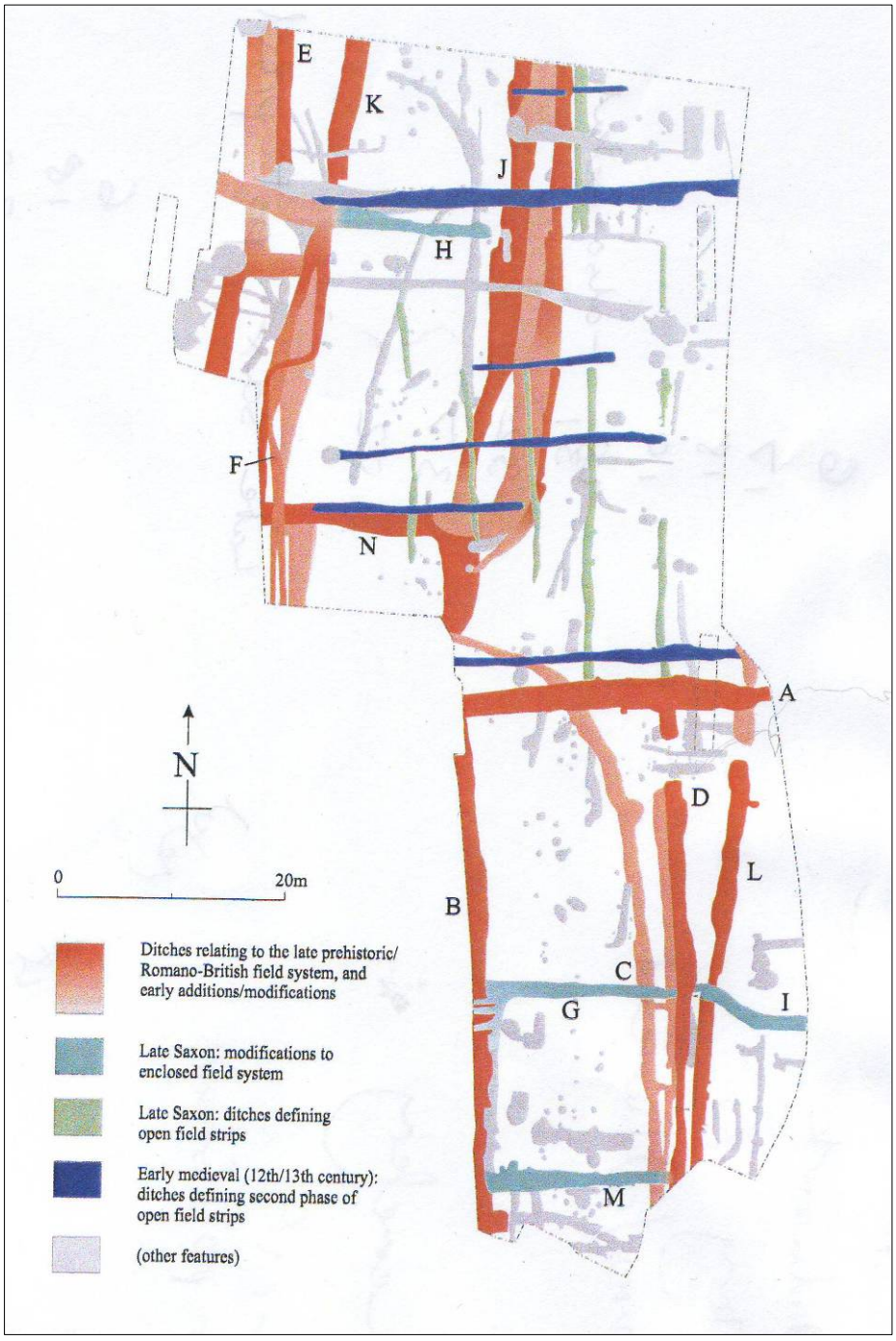



**Figure 124: Interpretation of excavated results at Creake Road, Burnham Sutton. (after Percival and Williamson, 2005).**

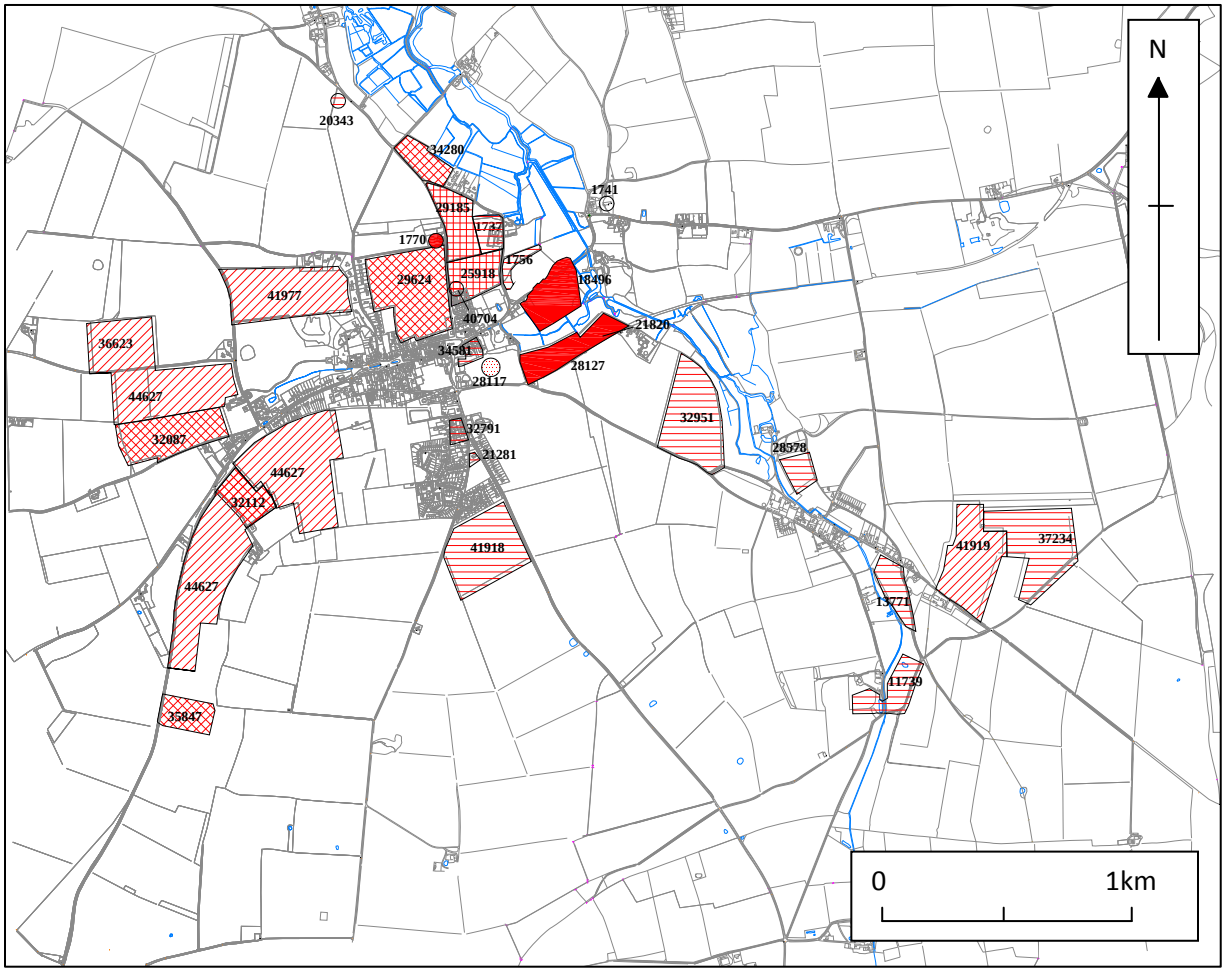



**Figure 125: Late Anglo-Saxon polygon analysis for Burnham (for full key see Figure. 69).** *© Crown Copyright/database right 2010. An Ordnance Survey/EDINA supplied service.*

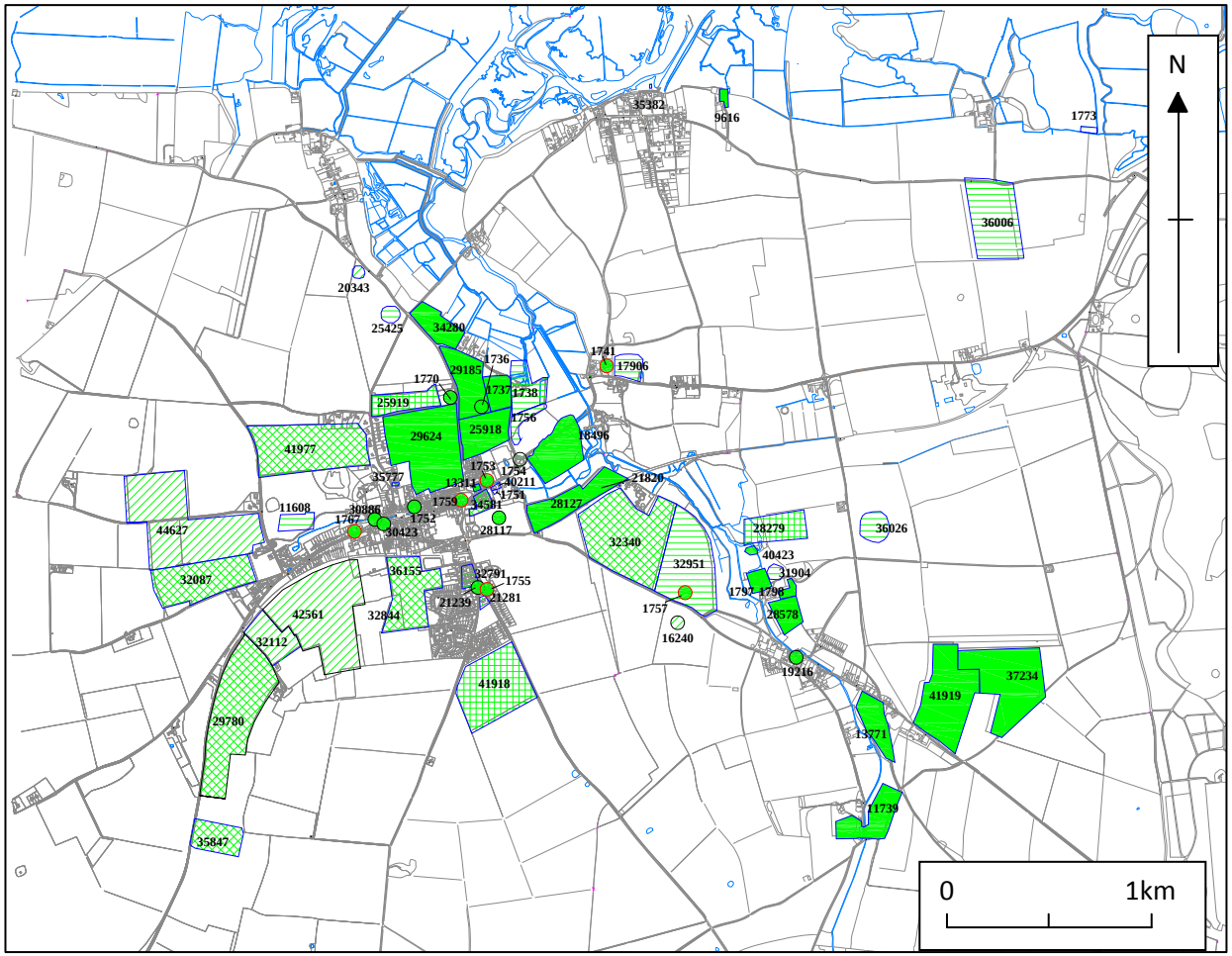



**Figure 126: Medieval polygon analysis for Burnham (for full key see Figure. 69).** *© Crown Copyright/database right 2010. An Ordnance Survey/EDINA supplied service.*

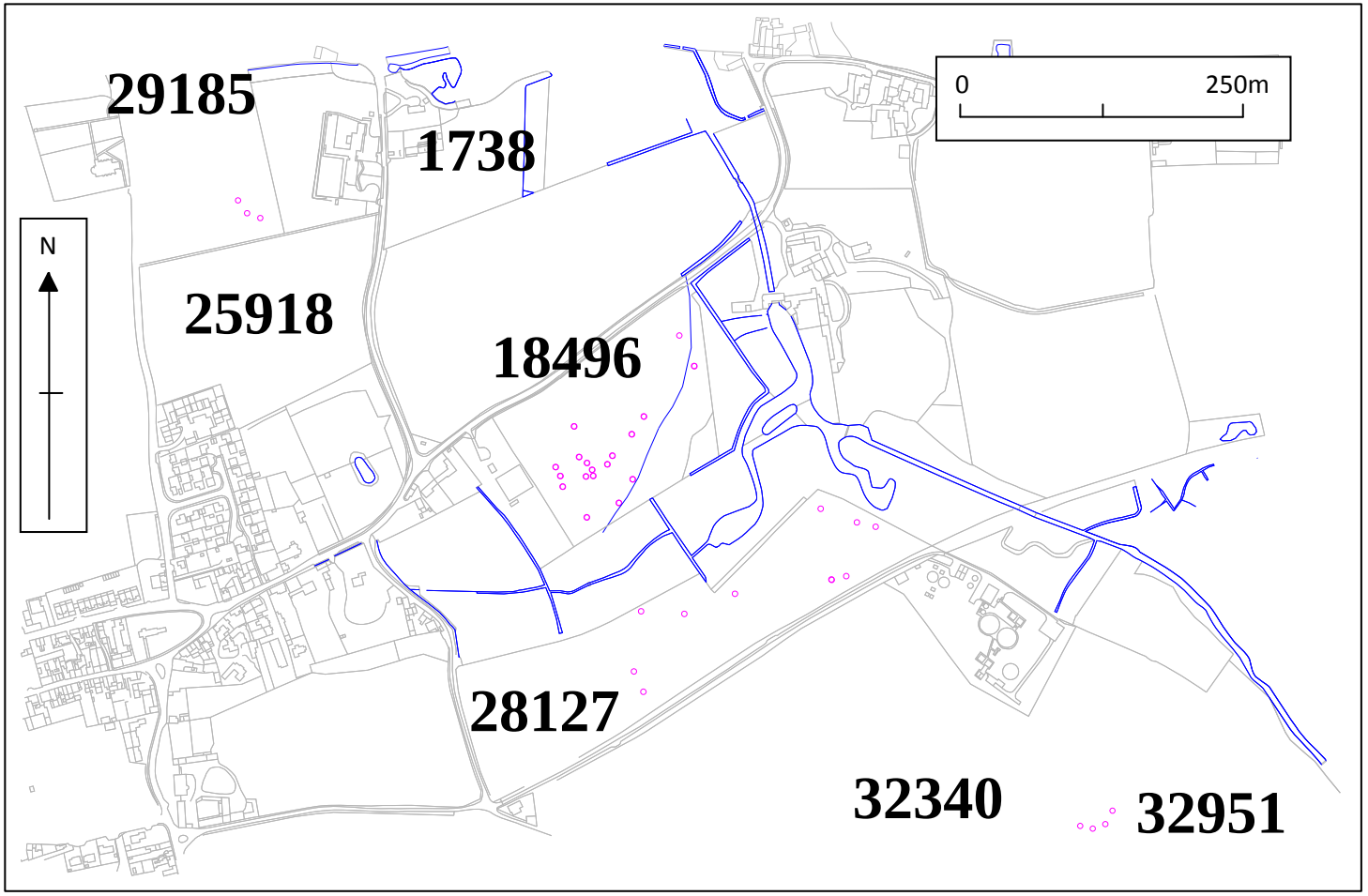



**Figure 127: Burnham: Early Anglo-Saxon located metal finds around 'Productive' site.** *© Crown Copyright/database right 2010. An Ordnance Survey/EDINA supplied service.*

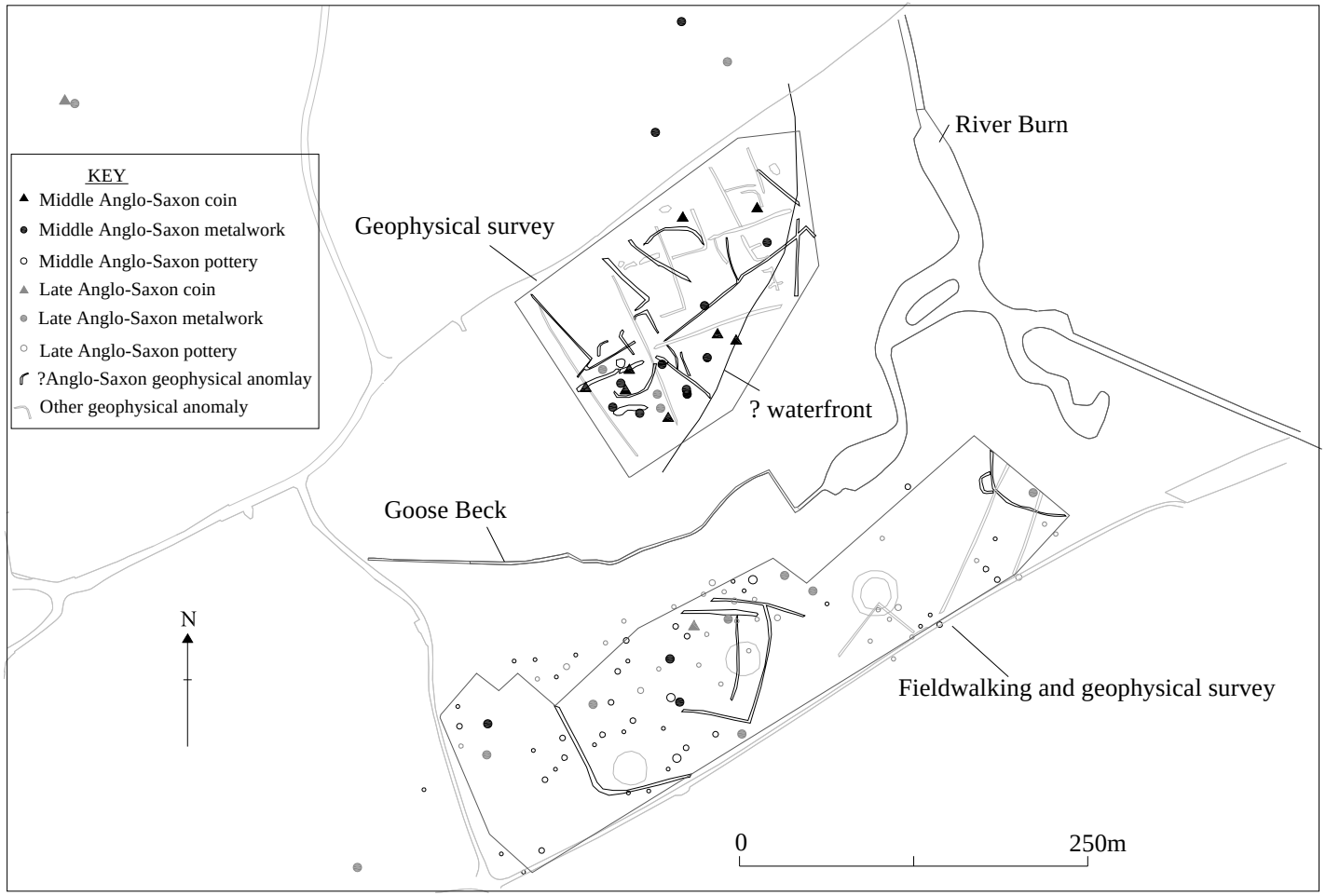



**Figure 128: Burnham: Distribution of Middle-Late Anglo-Saxon metalwork, pottery and interpreted geophysical anomalies around NHER 18496 (North), NHER 28127 (South).**

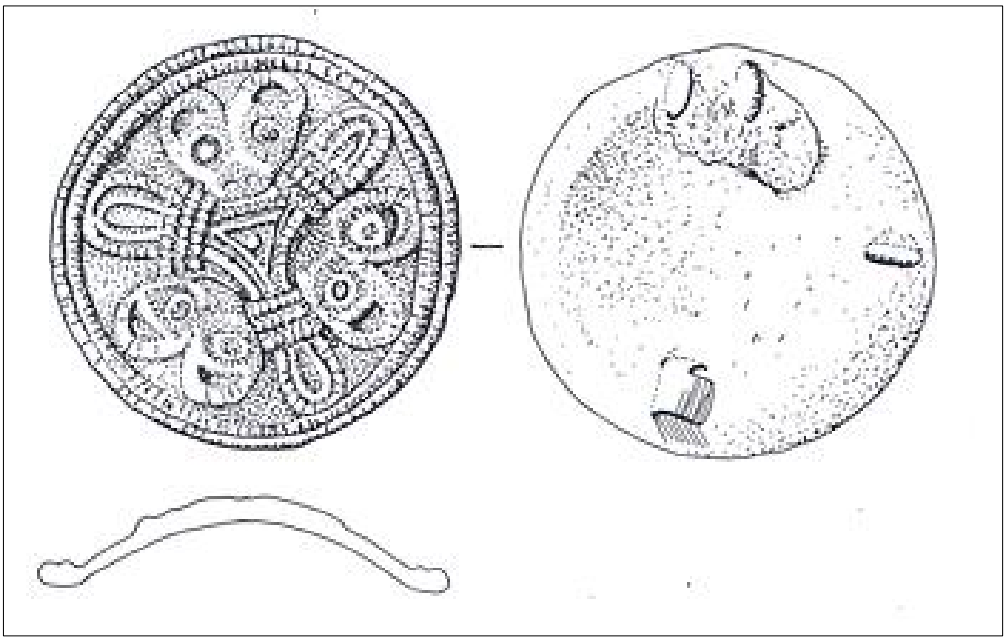


**Figure 129: Scandinavian Borre brooch from NHER 28127.**

**Figure 130: Stamped Early Anglo-Saxon pottery from NHER 28127.**

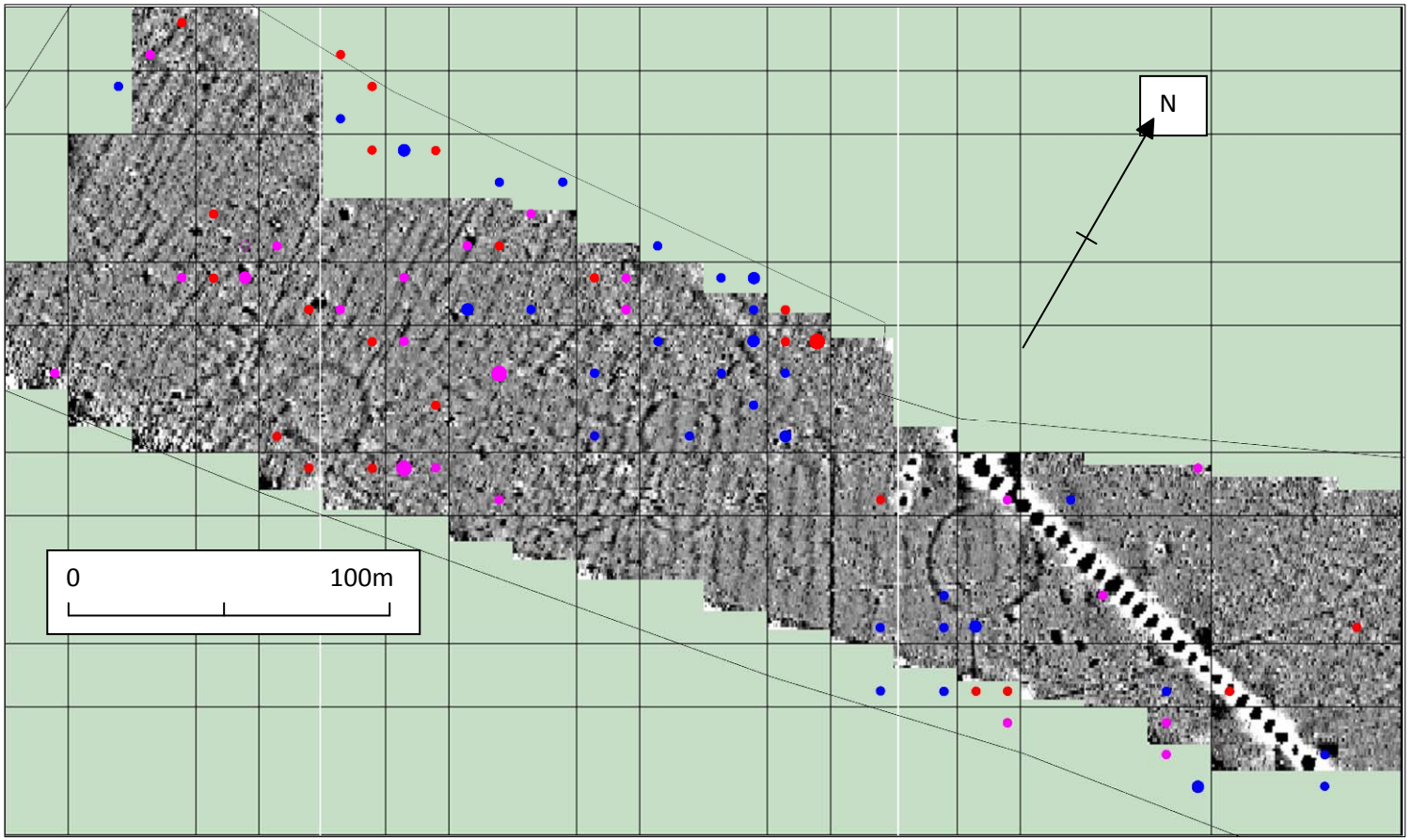



**Figure 131: Fieldwalking results at NHER 28127 (overlain on raw geophysical results). Early/ Middle Anglo-Saxon handmade (purple dots), Middle Anglo-Saxon pottery (red dots), Late Anglo-Saxon pottery (blue).**

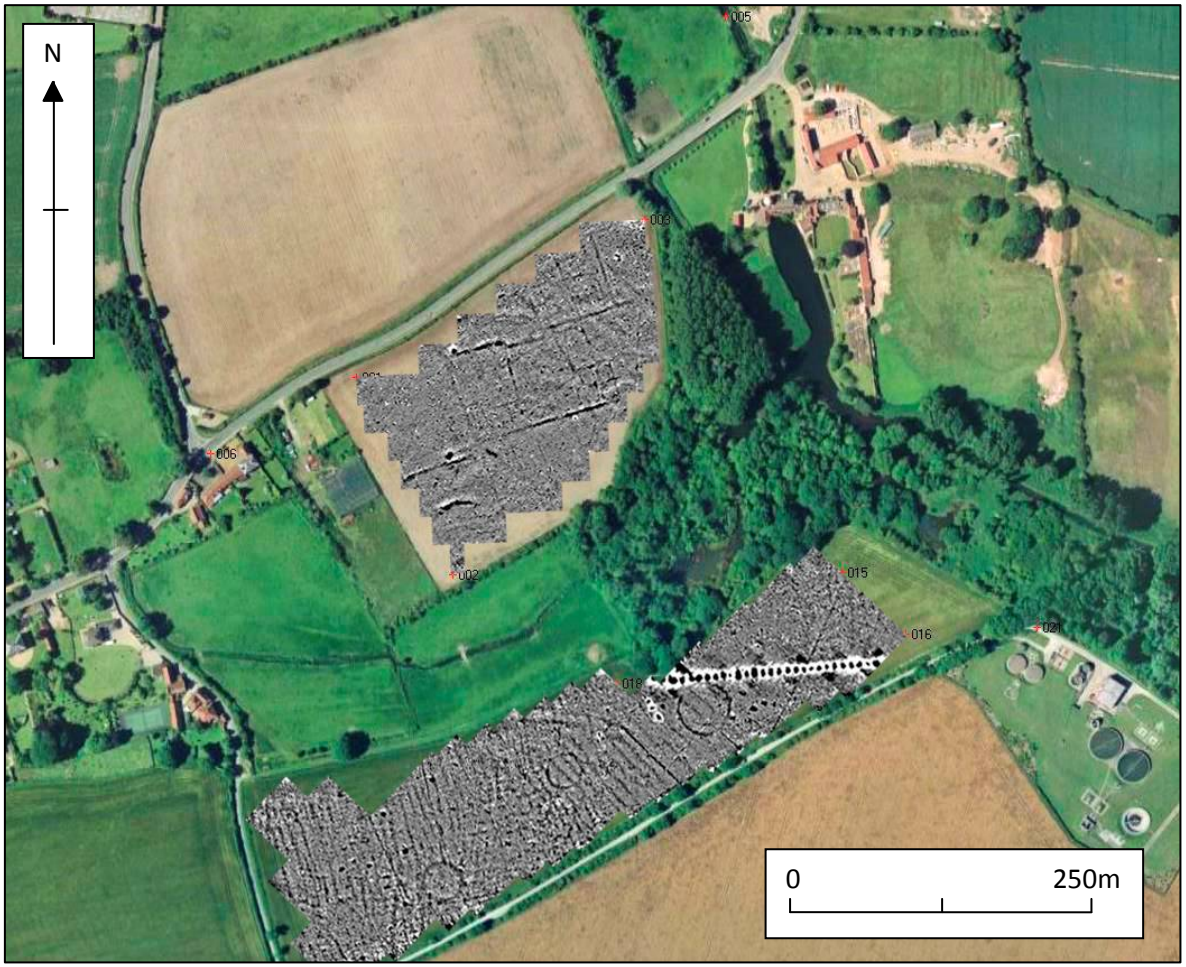



**Figure 132: Location and landscape context of Geophysical surveys in NHER 18496 (North), NHER 28127 (South). © Google Image.**

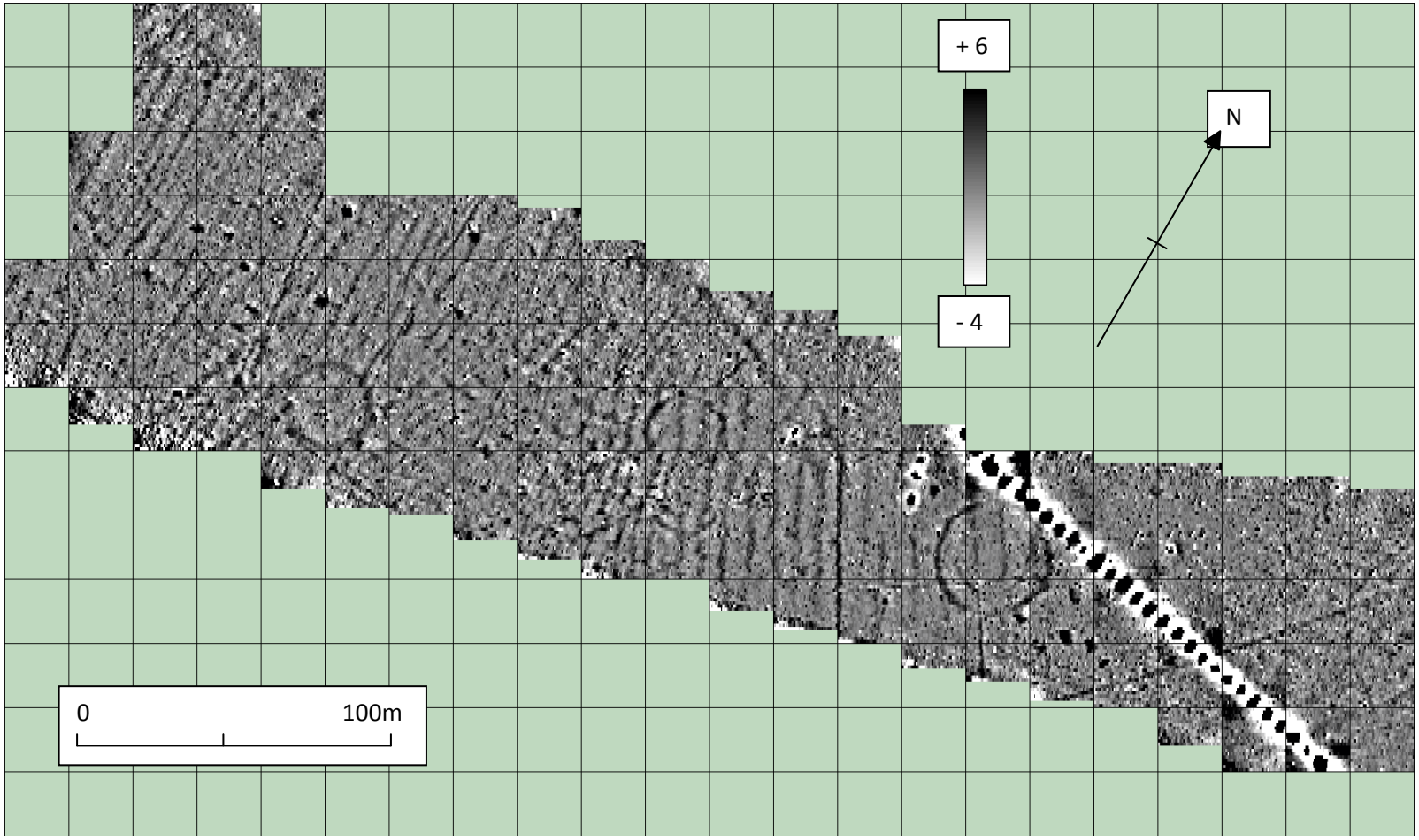



**Figure 133: Raw interpreted Geophysical results at NHER 28127.**

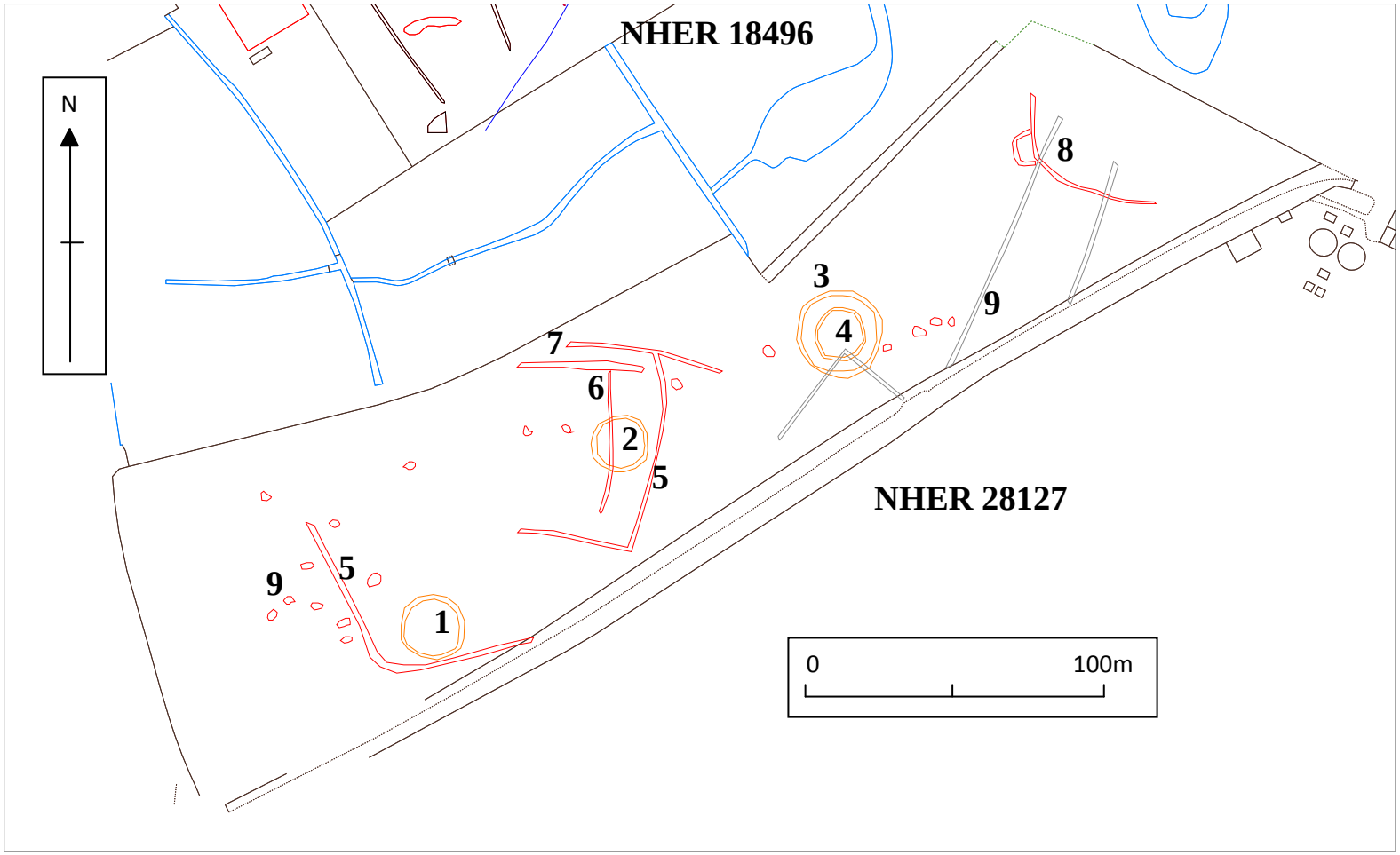



**Figure 134: Interpreted Geophysical results at NHER 28127.**

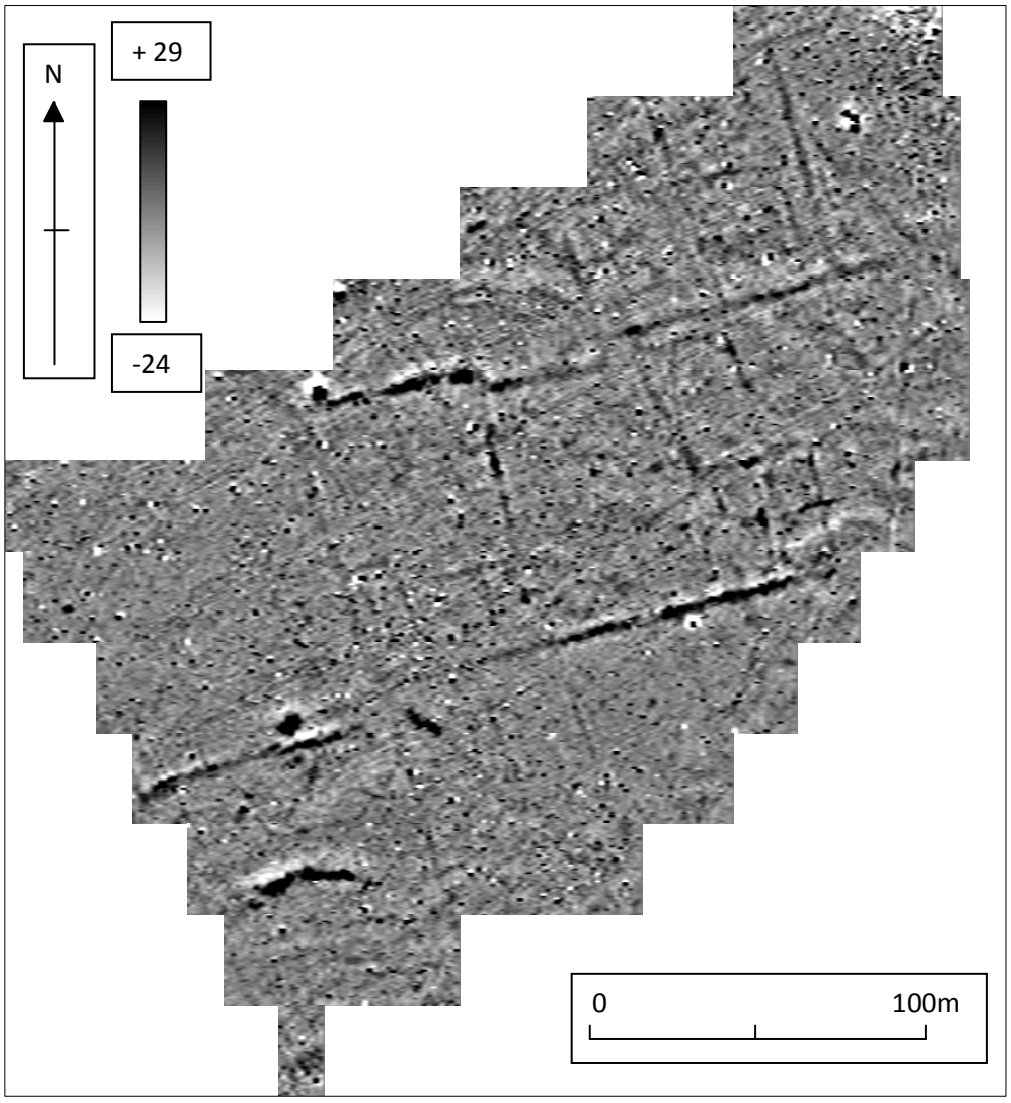



**Figure 135: Raw interpreted Geophysical results at NHER 18496.**

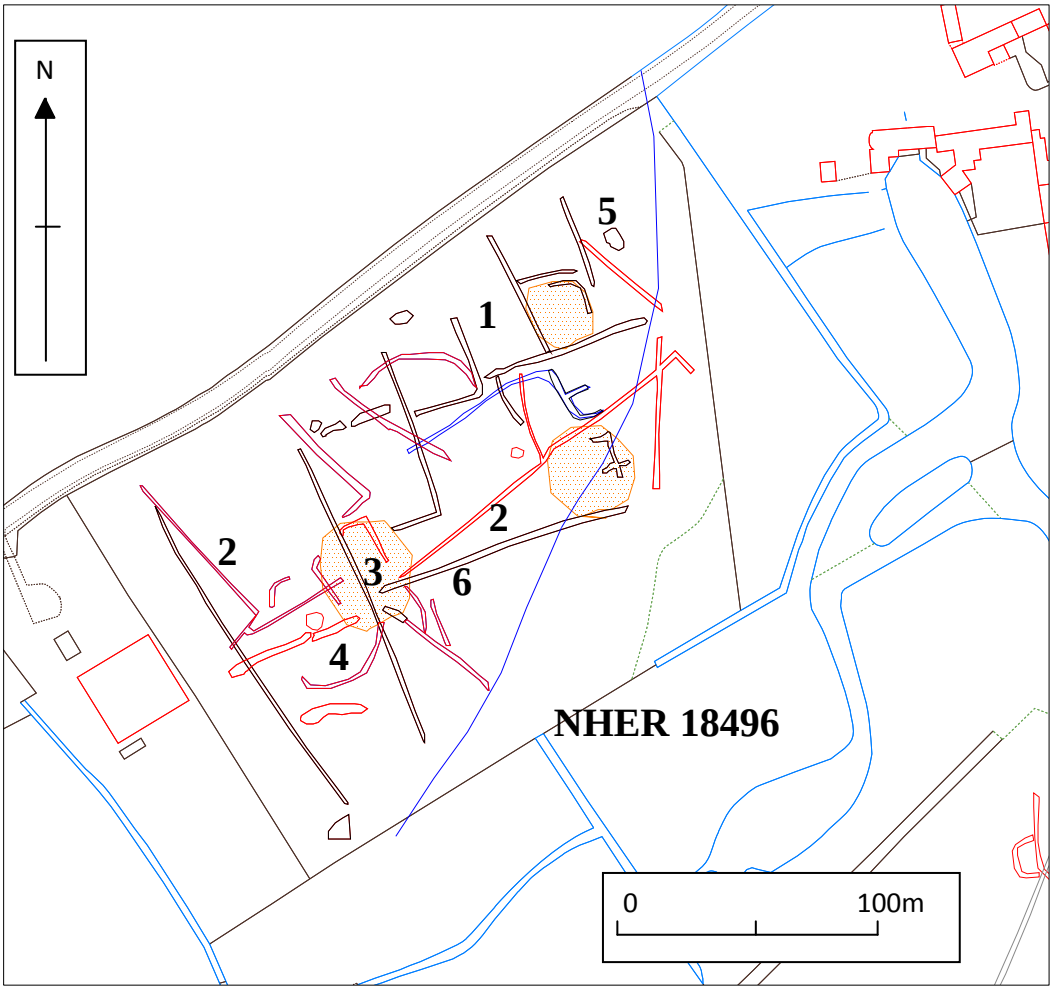



**Figure 136: Interpreted Geophysical results at NHER 18406.**

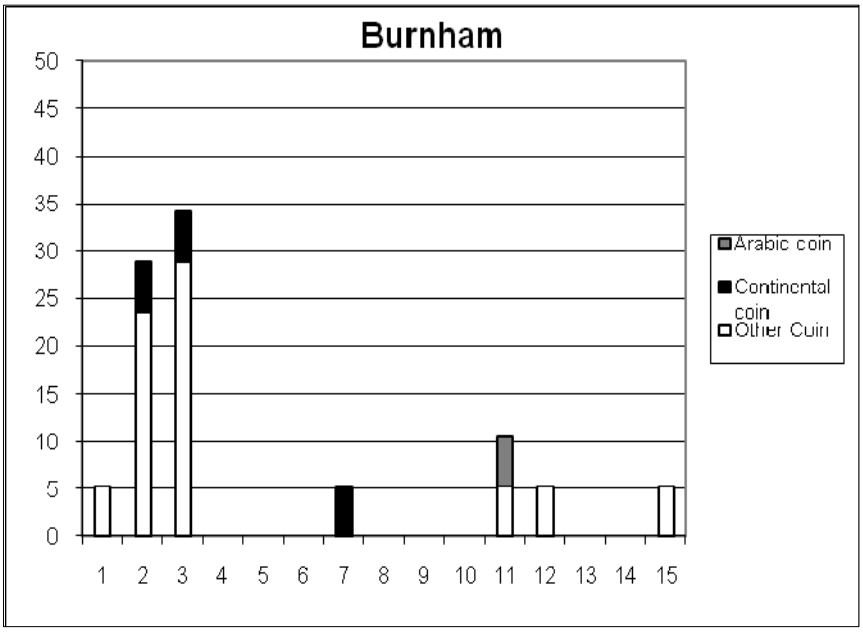



**Figure 137: Burnham: Coin loss (percentage) by date group and source.** Coin group dates (adapted after Naylor 2007, new groups in italics): **1** pre-680; **2** c 680–710; **3** c710–40; **4** c 740–60; **5** c 760–90; **6** c 790–810; **7** 810–40; **8** c 840–55; **9** 855-70**;** ***10*** *870–900;* ***11*** *900–30;* ***12*** *930-60;* ***13*** *960-90;* ***14*** *990-1020;* ***15*** *1020-50* (data NHER and Fitzwilliam Museum Online Corpus).

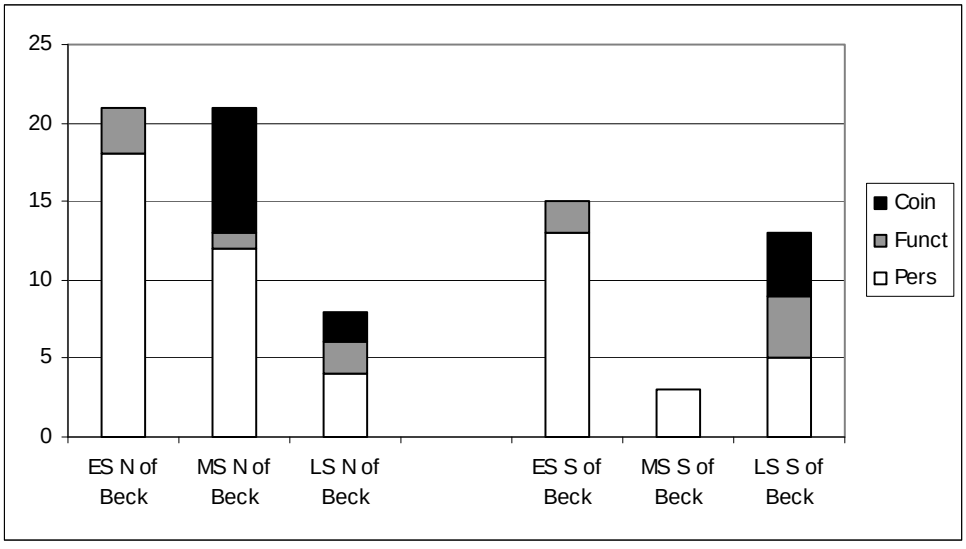



**Figure 138: Metalwork and coin loss North (NHER 18946) and South (NHER 28127) of the beck compared (number of finds).**

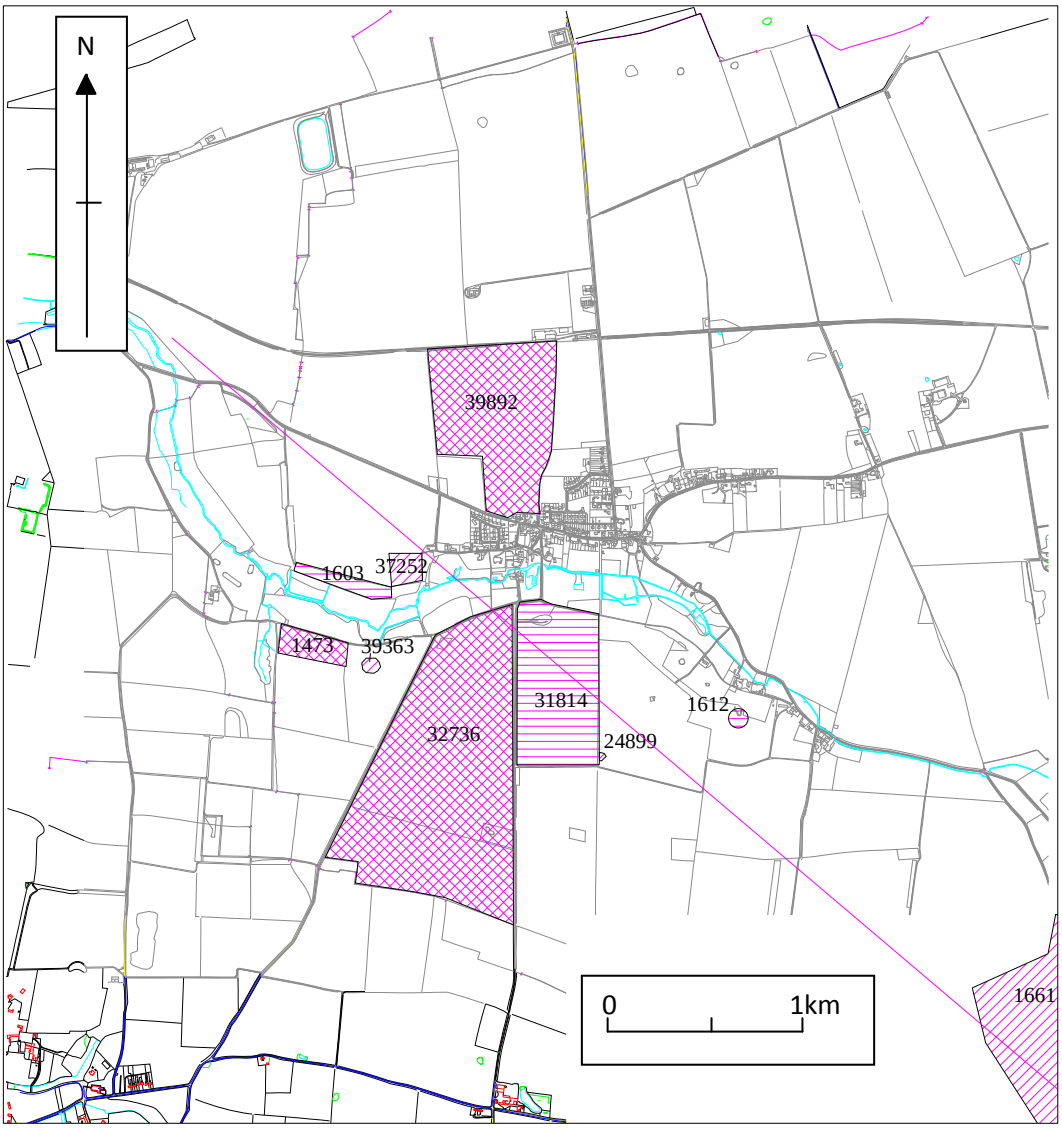



**Figure 139: Early Anglo-Saxon polygon analysis for Sedgeford (for full key see Figure. 69).** *© Crown Copyright/database right 2010. An Ordnance Survey/EDINA supplied service.*

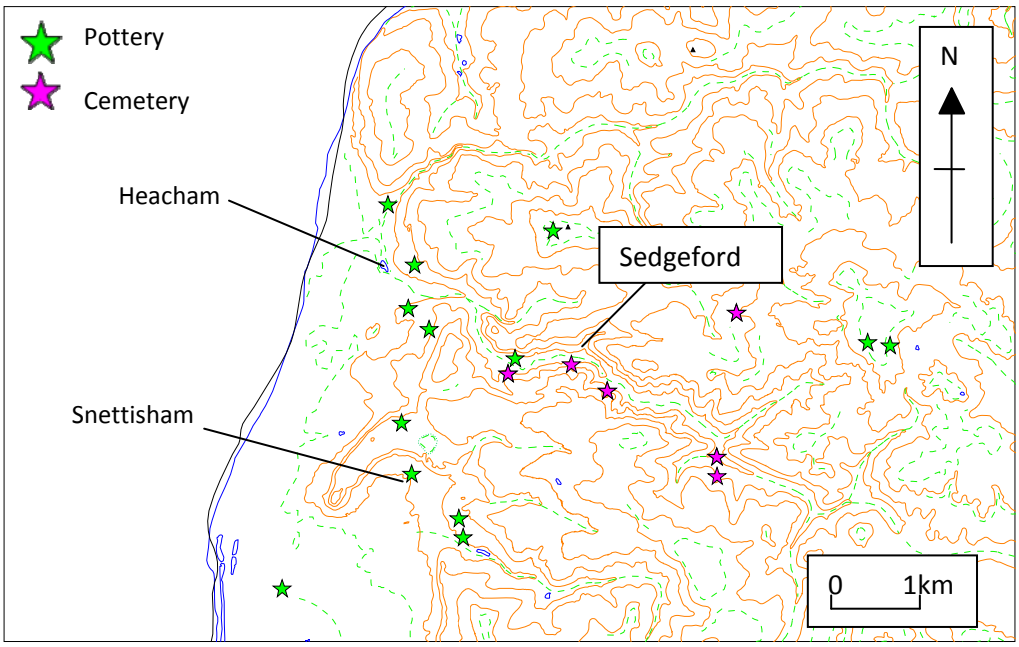



**Figure 140: Distribution of potential Early Anglo-Saxon settlements and cemeteries in parishes surrounding Sedgeford.**

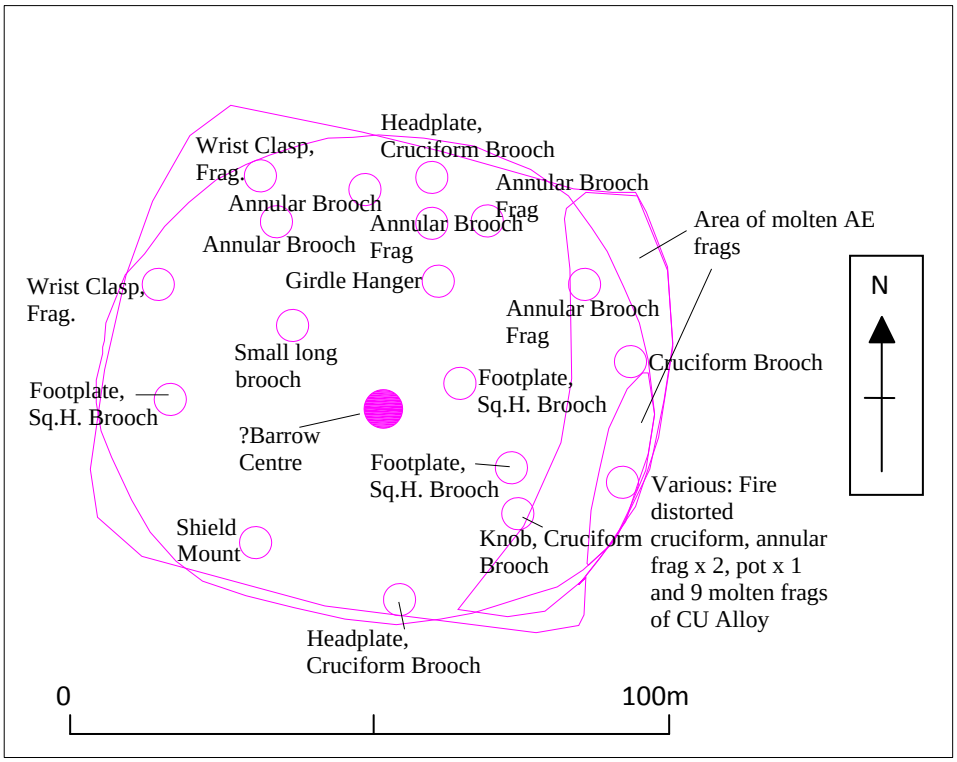



**Figure 141: Distribution of Early Anglo-Saxon finds around possible ploughed-out barrow at NHER 39363 (unpublished NHER data).**

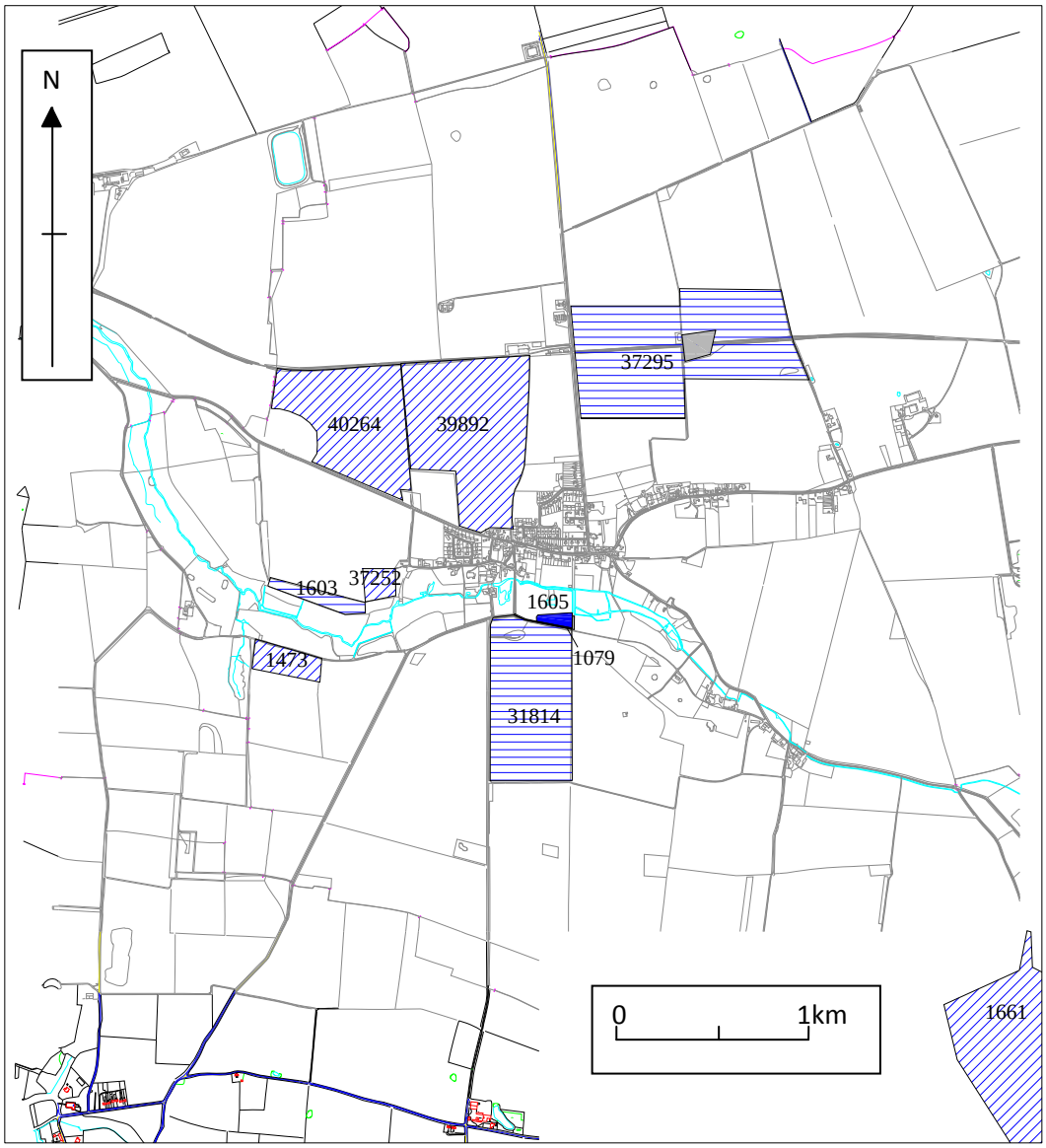



**Figure 142: Middle Anglo-Saxon polygon analysis for Sedgeford (for full key see Figure. 69).** *© Crown Copyright/database right 2010. An Ordnance Survey/EDINA supplied service.*

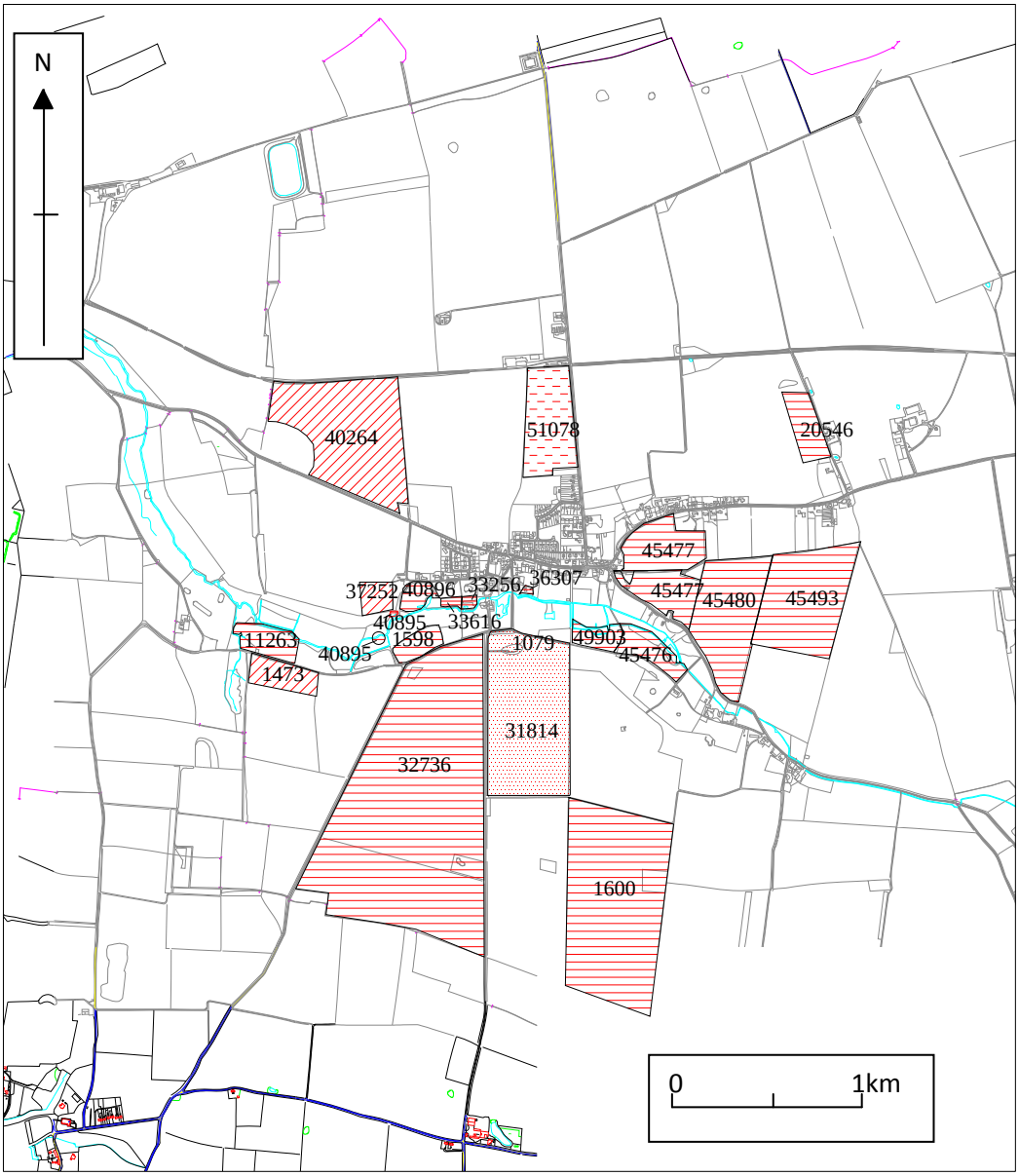



**Figure 143: Late Anglo-Saxon polygon analysis for Sedgeford (for full key see Figure. 69).** *© Crown Copyright/database right 2010. An Ordnance Survey/EDINA supplied service.*

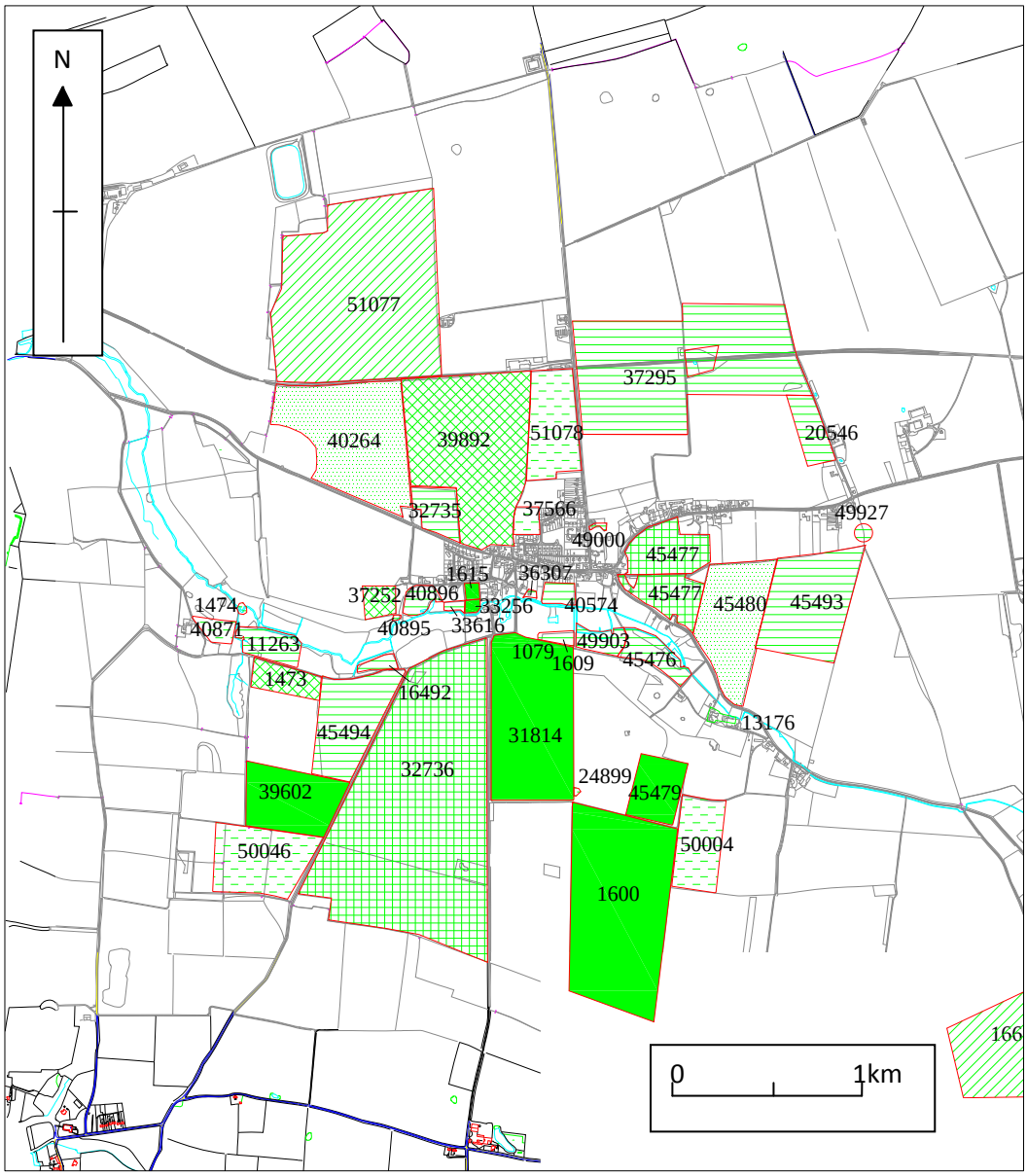



**Figure 144: Medieval polygon analysis for Sedgeford (for full key see Figure. 69).** *© Crown Copyright/database right 2010. An Ordnance Survey/EDINA supplied service.*

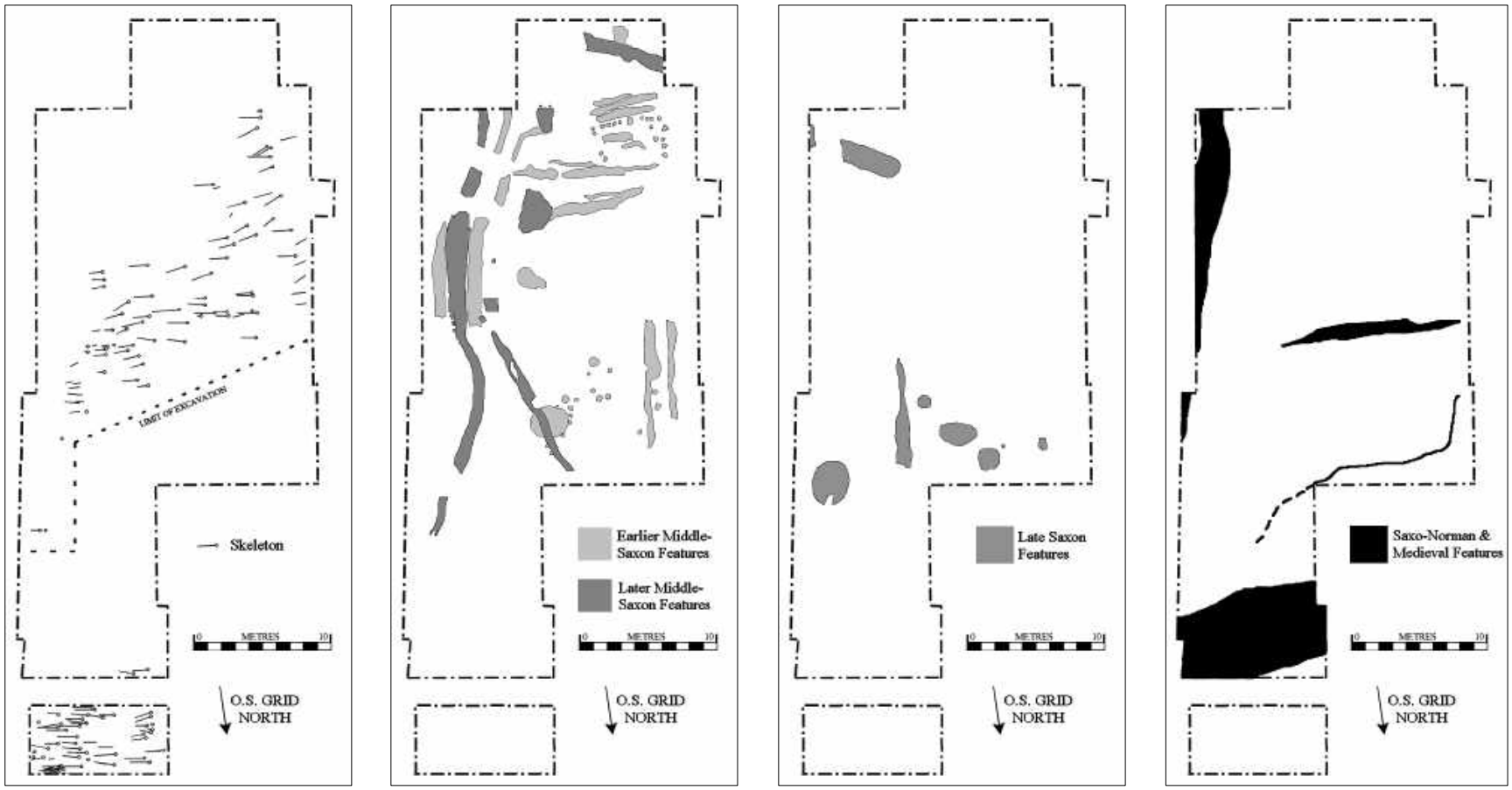



**Figure 145: Dynamic excavated settlement sequence at Sedgeford (Middle Anglo-Saxon to Saxo-Norman) as identified within SHARP excavation trenches (1996-2007).**

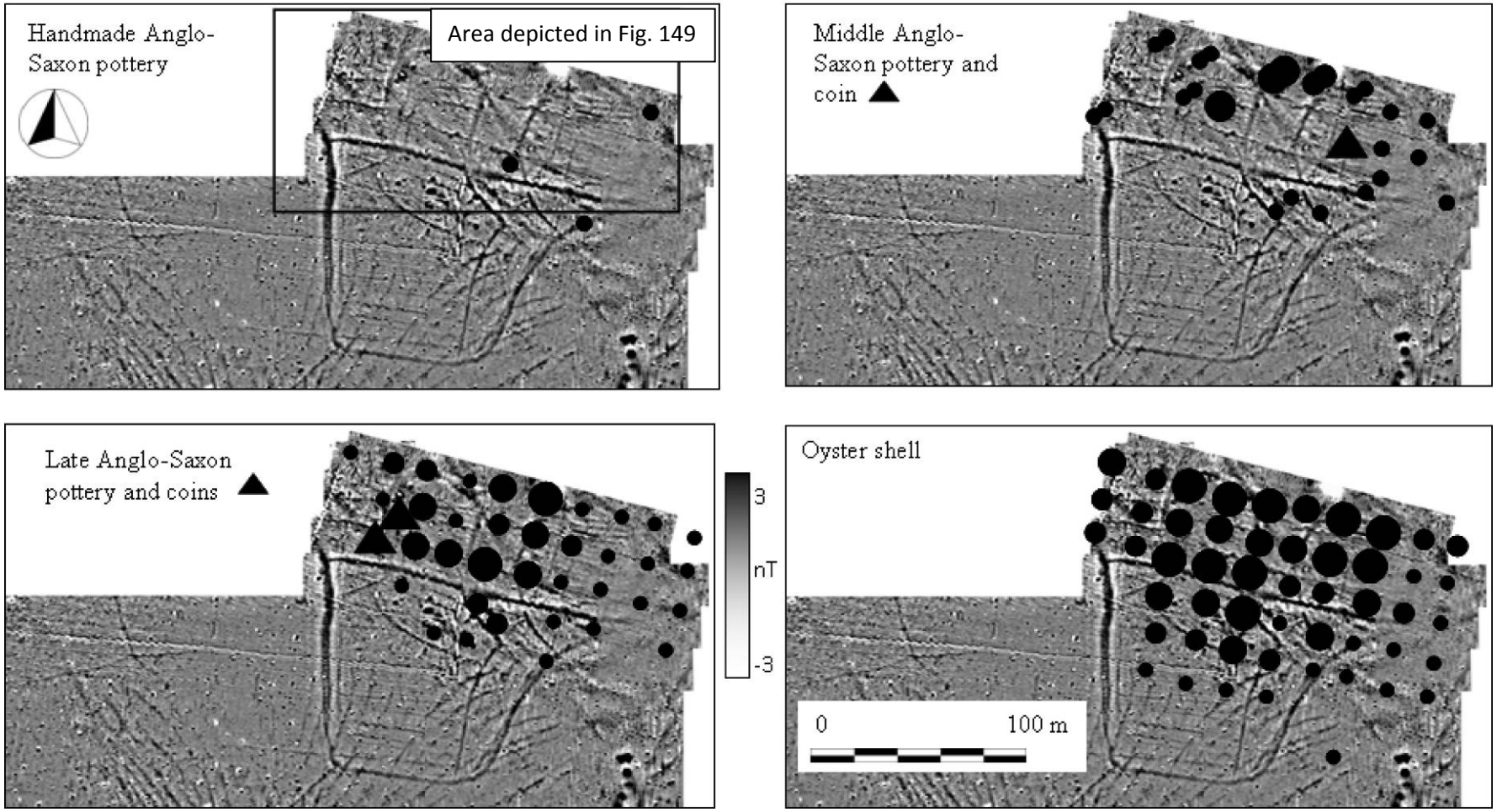



**Figure 146: Fieldwalking and metal detecting results at NHER 1079 (overlaid onto geophysical results).**

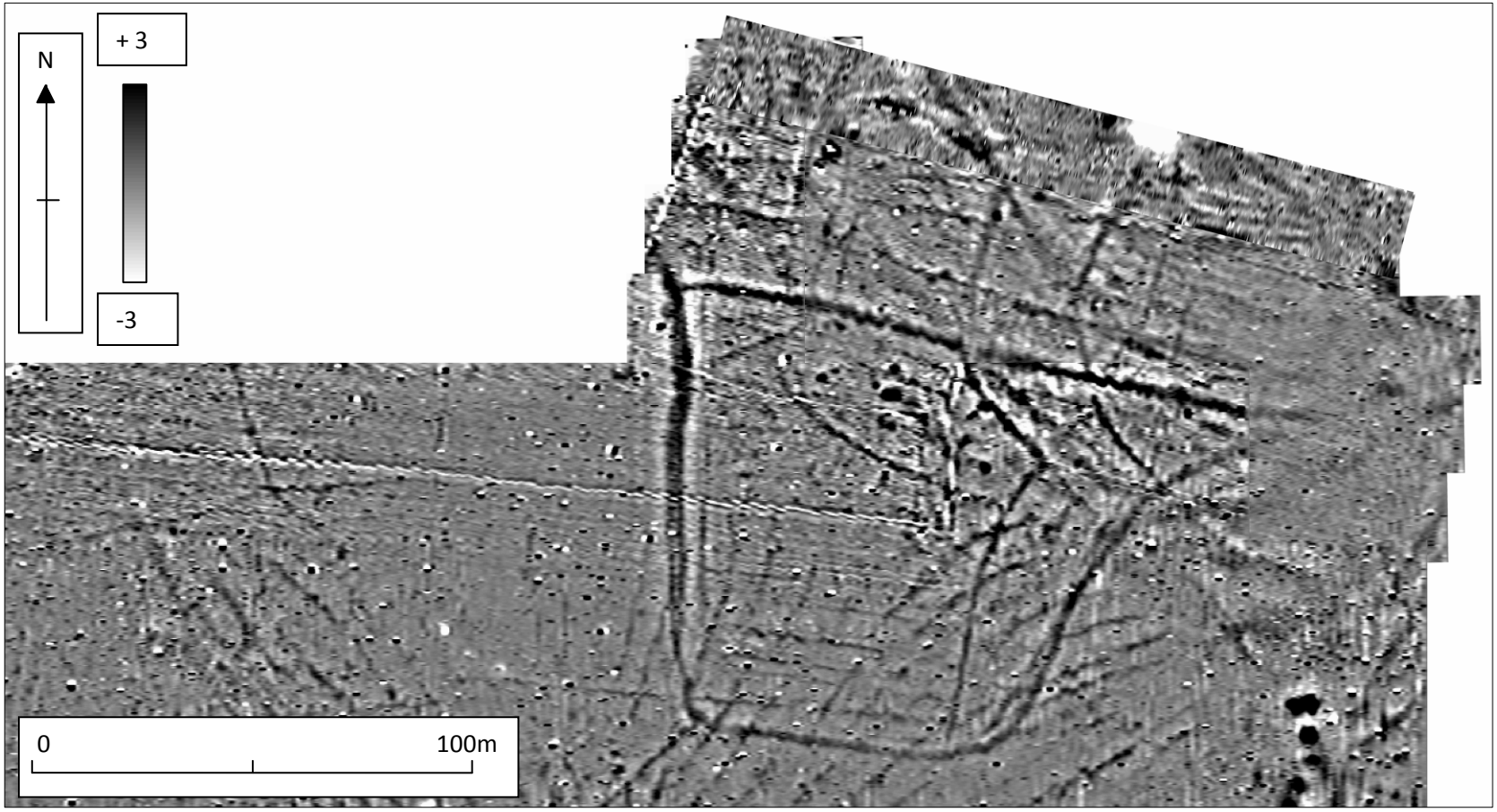



**Figure 147: Raw interpreted geophysical results at NHER 1079.**

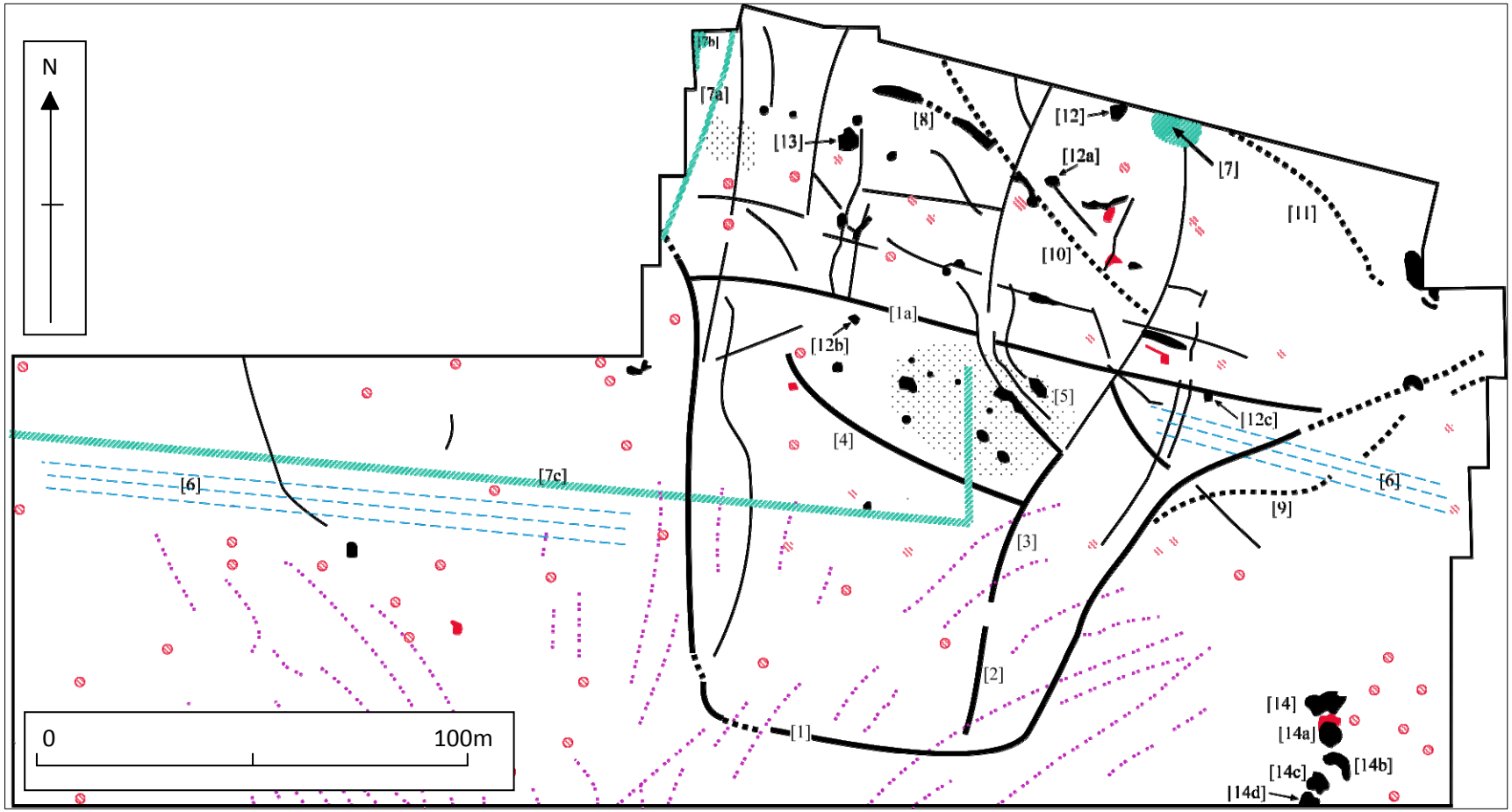



**Figure 148: Interpreted geophysical results at NHER 1079.**

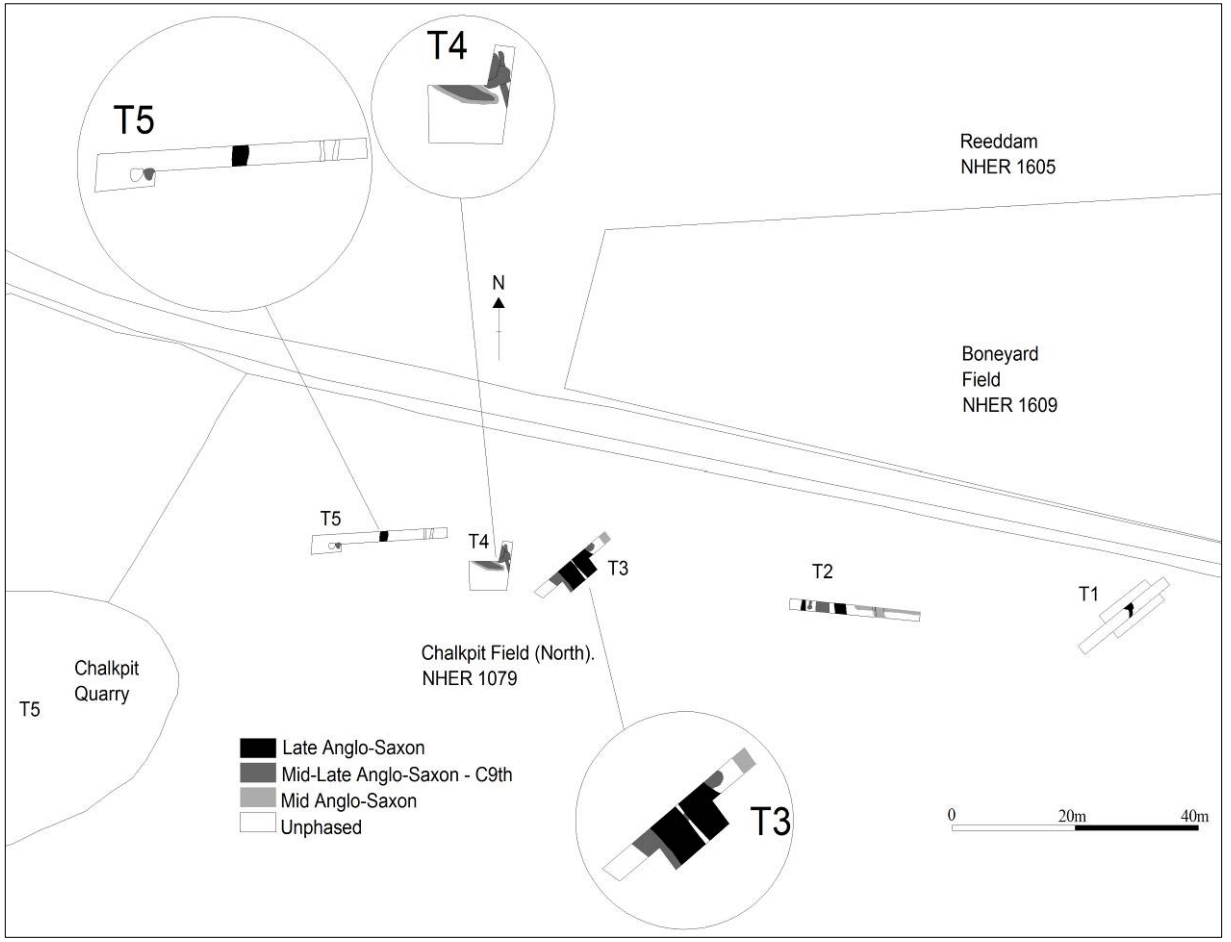



**Figure 149: Excavated trial trenches and phased features at NHER 1079 (see Figure 146 for location).**

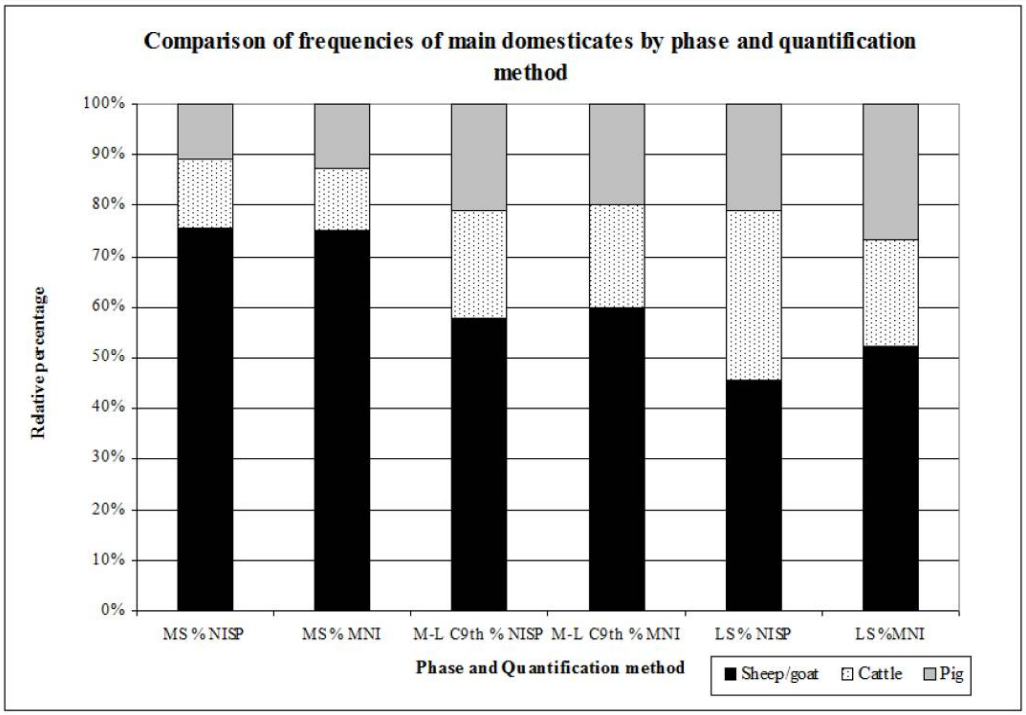



**Figure 150: Frequencies of main domesticates at Sedgeford by phase and quantification method (NISP: Number of identified specimens, MNI: Minimum number of individuals).**

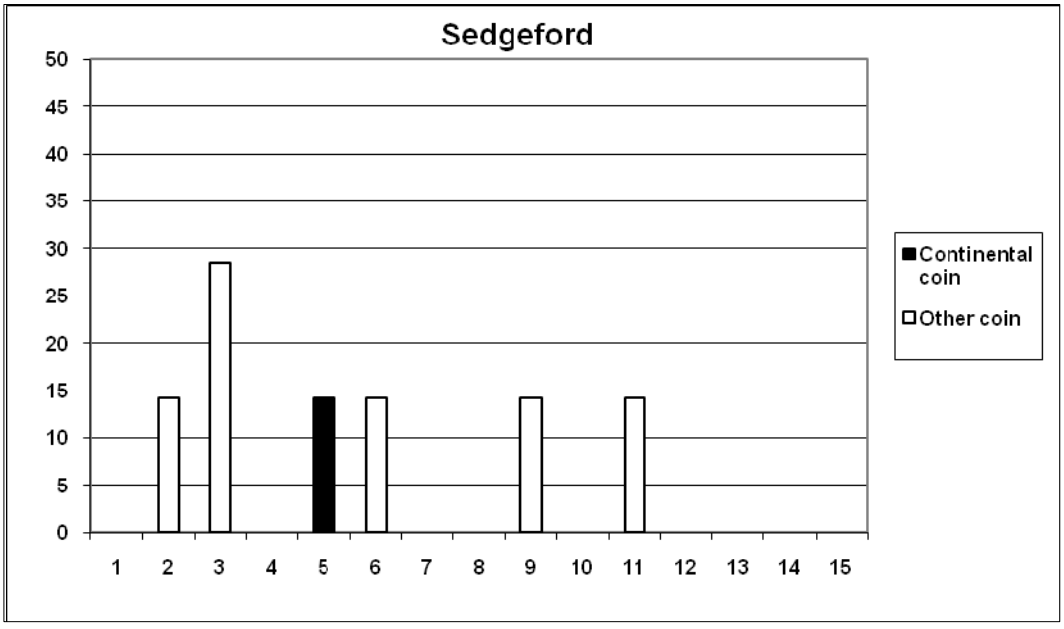



**Figure 151: Sedgeford: Coin loss (percentage) by date group and source.** Coin group dates (adapted after Naylor 2007, new groups in italics): **1** pre-680; **2** c 680–710; **3** c710–40; **4** c 740–60; **5** c 760–90; **6** c 790–810; **7** 810–40; **8** c 840–55; **9** 855-70**;** ***10*** *870–900;* ***11*** *900–30;* ***12*** *930-60;* ***13*** *960-90;* ***14*** *990-1020;* ***15*** *1020-50* (data NHER and Fitzwilliam Museum Online Corpus).


**Figure 152: Selected artefacts from Sedgeford. Top: Two coins, St. Edmund memorial penny, c.895-910 (left) and Burgred of Mercia penny, 852-74 (right). Middle: Middle Anglo-Saxon decorated vessel glass. Bottom: Stylus.**

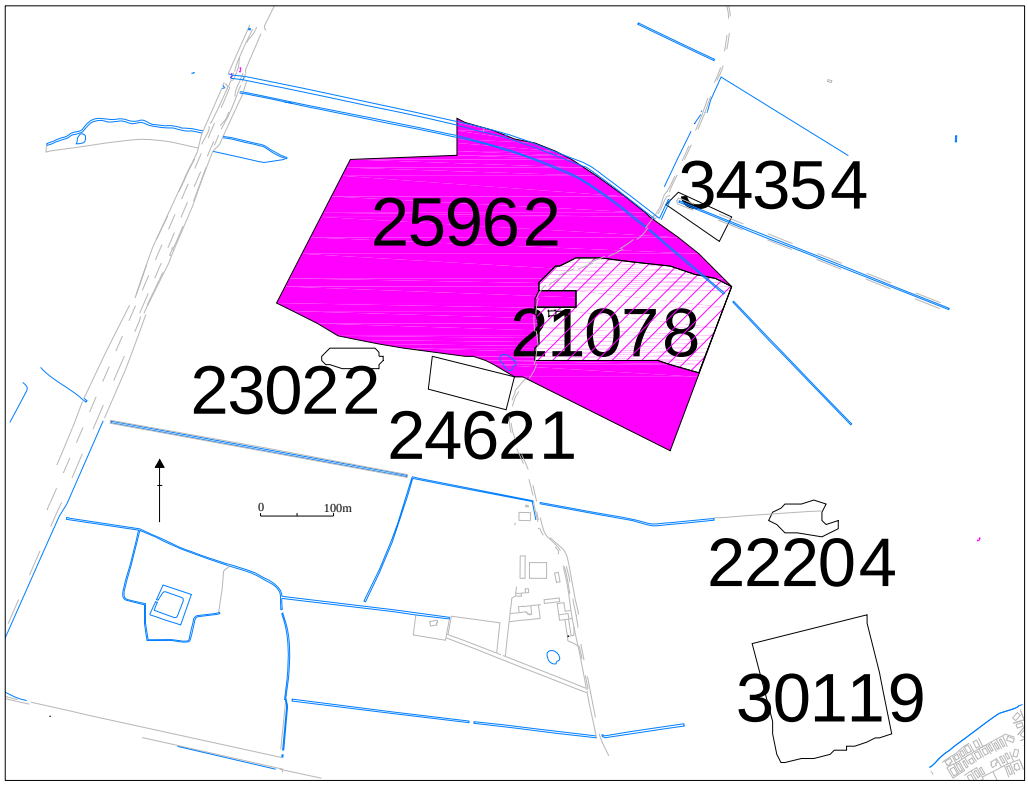



**Figure 153: Early Anglo-Saxon polygon analysis for Bawsey (for full key see Figure. 69).** *© Crown Copyright/database right 2010. An Ordnance Survey/EDINA supplied service.*

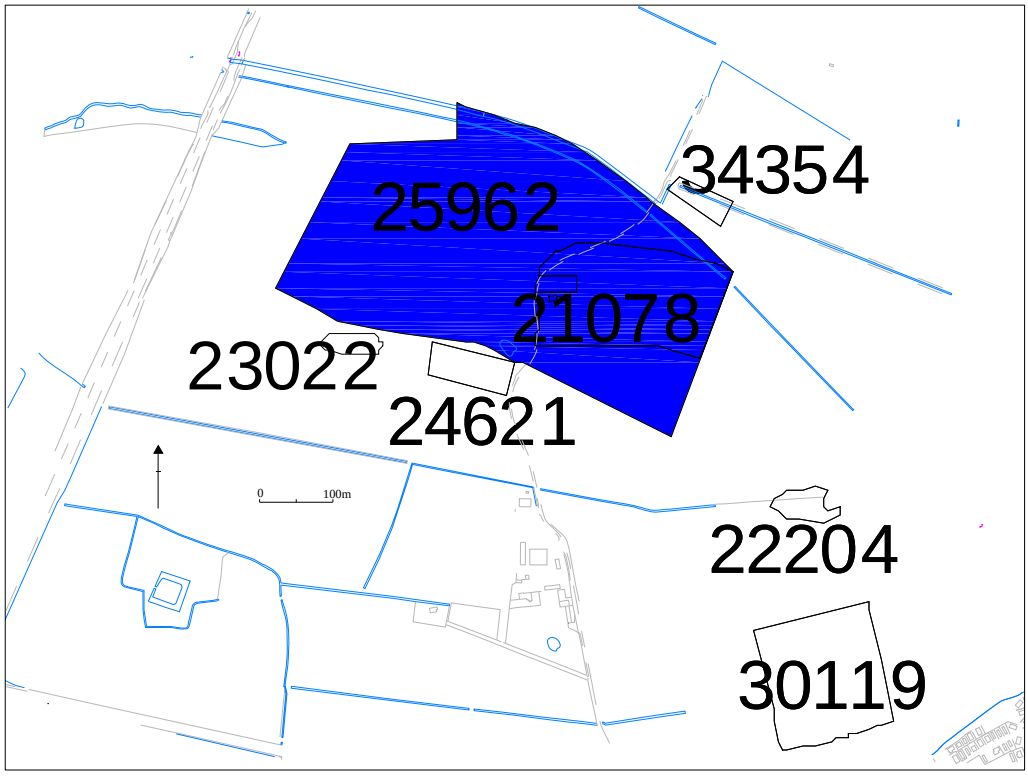



**Figure 154: Middle Anglo-Saxon polygon analysis for Bawsey (for full key see Figure. 69).** *© Crown Copyright/database right 2010. An Ordnance Survey/EDINA supplied service.*

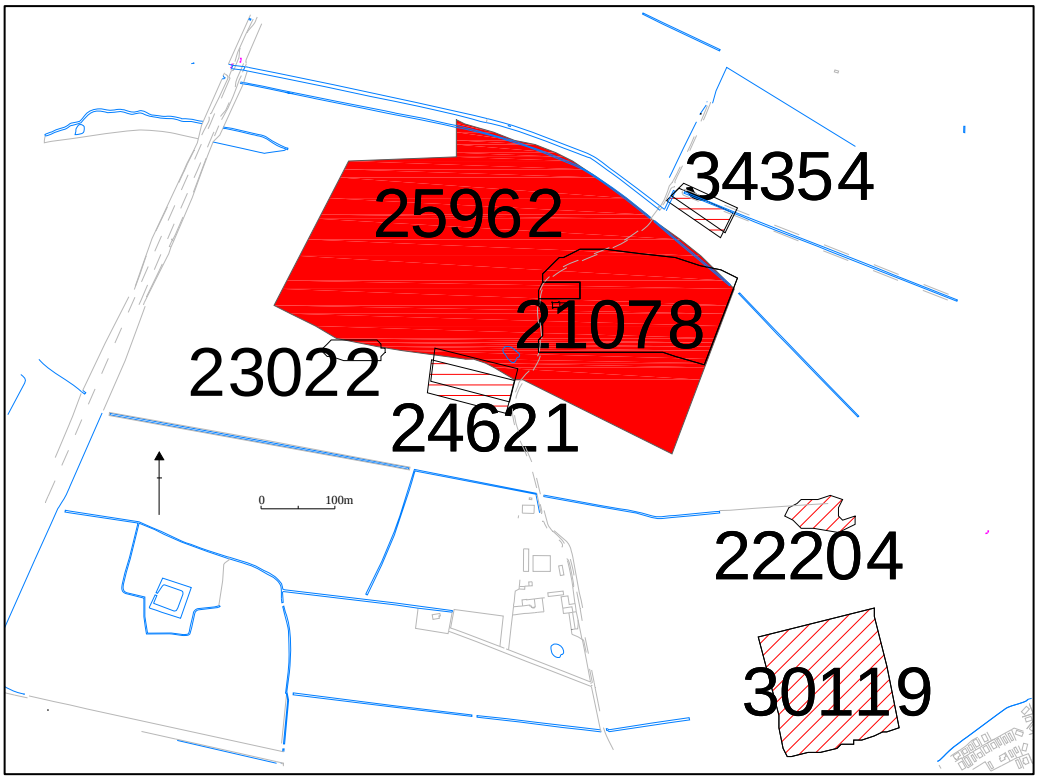



**Figure 155: Late Anglo-Saxon polygon analysis for Bawsey (for full key see Figure. 69).**
*© Crown Copyright/database right 2010. An Ordnance Survey/EDINA supplied service.*

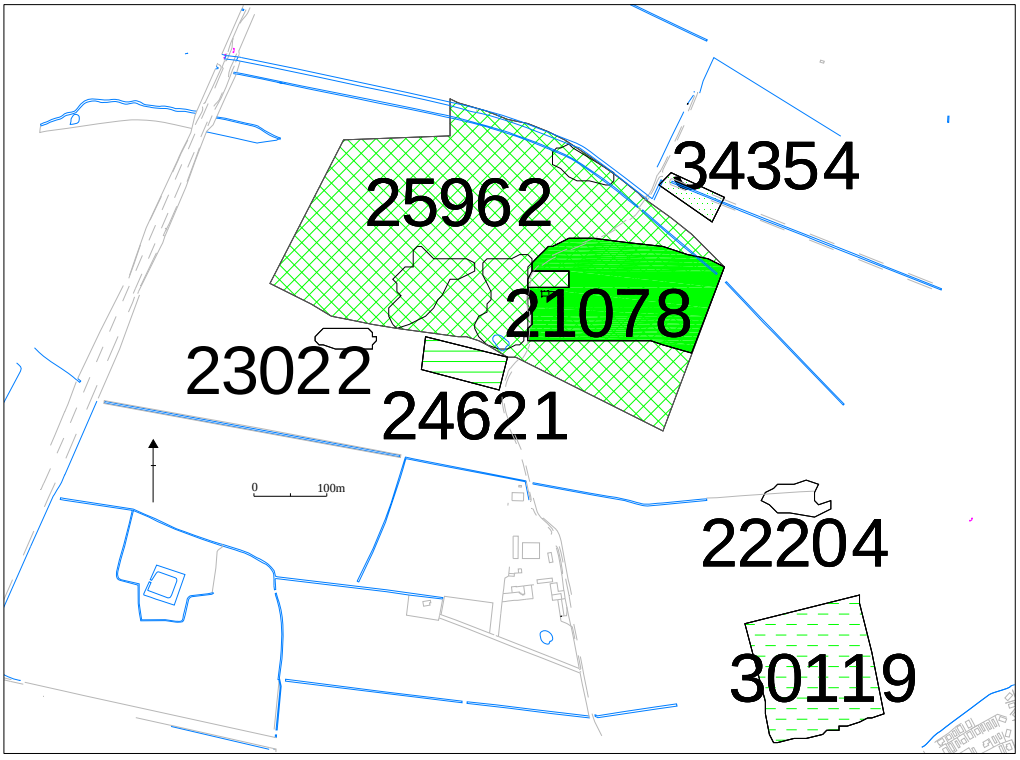



**Figure 156: Medieval polygon analysis for Bawsey (for full key see Figure. 69).** *© Crown Copyright/database right 2010. An Ordnance Survey/EDINA supplied service.*


**Figure 157: Interpreted and numbered Geophysical anomalies at Bawsey (red) (after GSB prospection, 1998).**

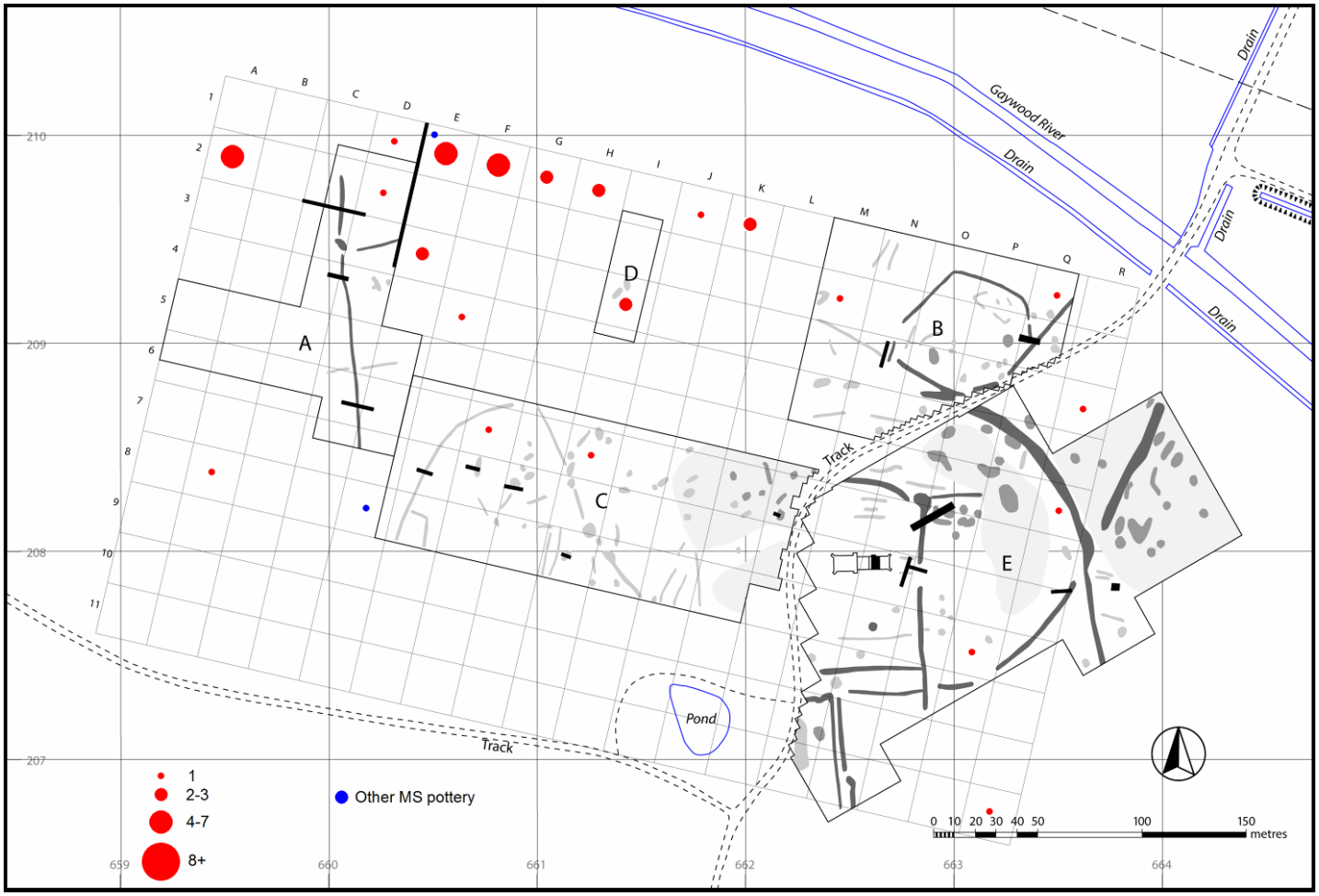



**Figure 158: Surface finds of Middle Anglo-Saxon pottery at Bawsey (Unpublished data, courtesy of Tim Pestell).**

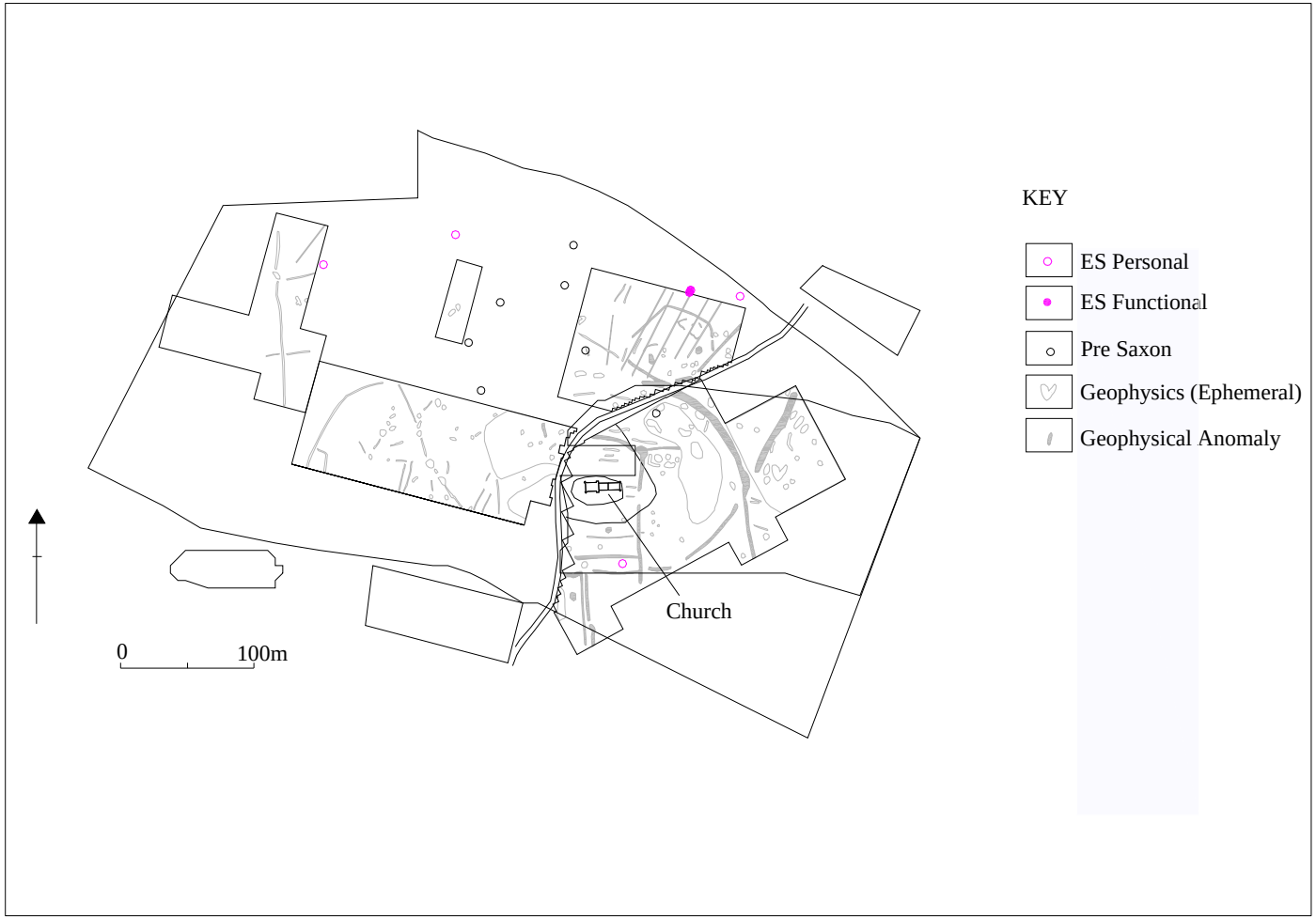



**Figure 159: Located Findspots of Early Anglo-Saxon metalwork at Bawsey (Unpublished NHER data).**

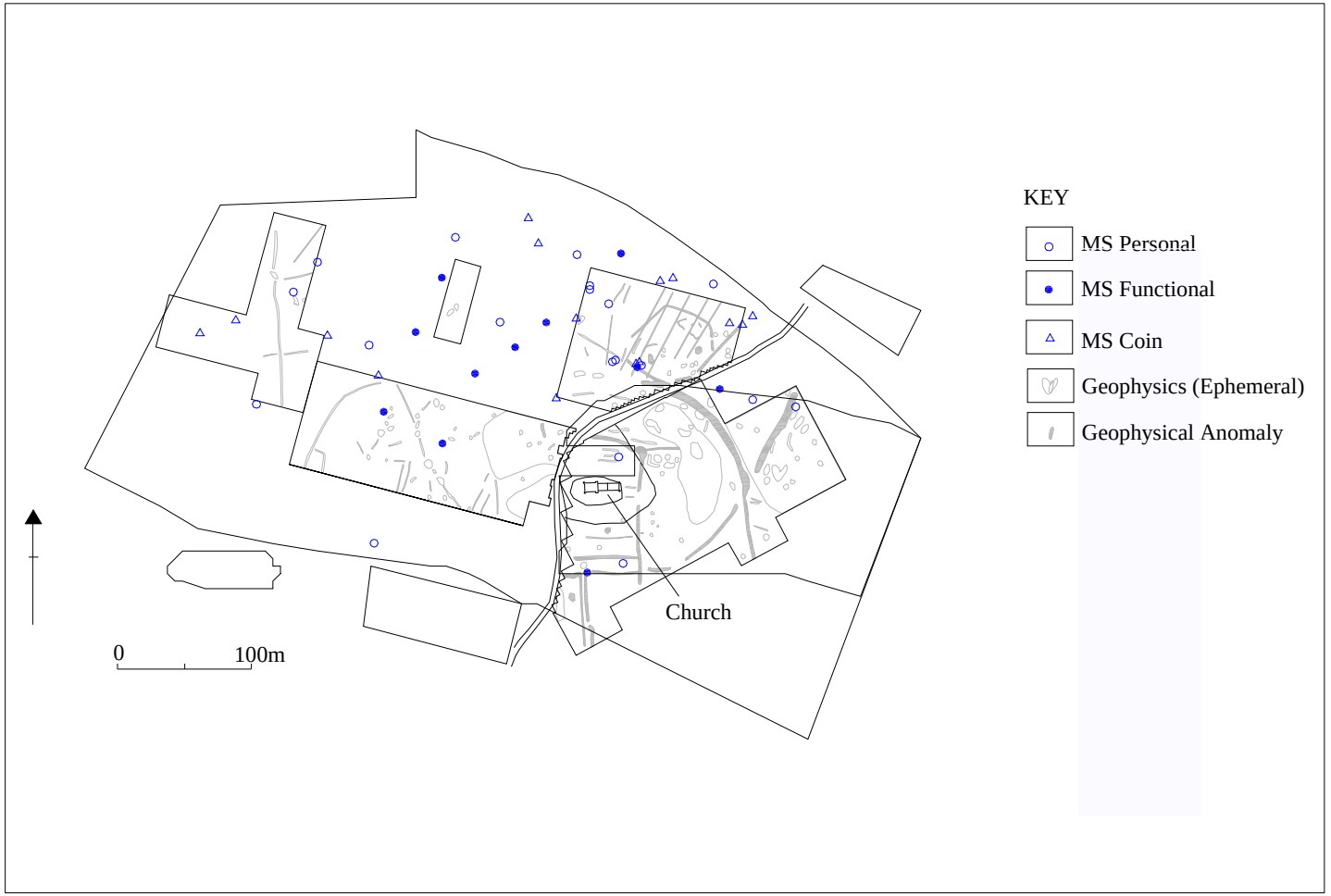



**Figure 160: Located Findspots of Middle Anglo-Saxon metalwork at Bawsey (Unpublished NHER data).**


**Figure 161: Located Findspots of Late Anglo-Saxon metalwork at Bawsey (Unpublished NHER data).**

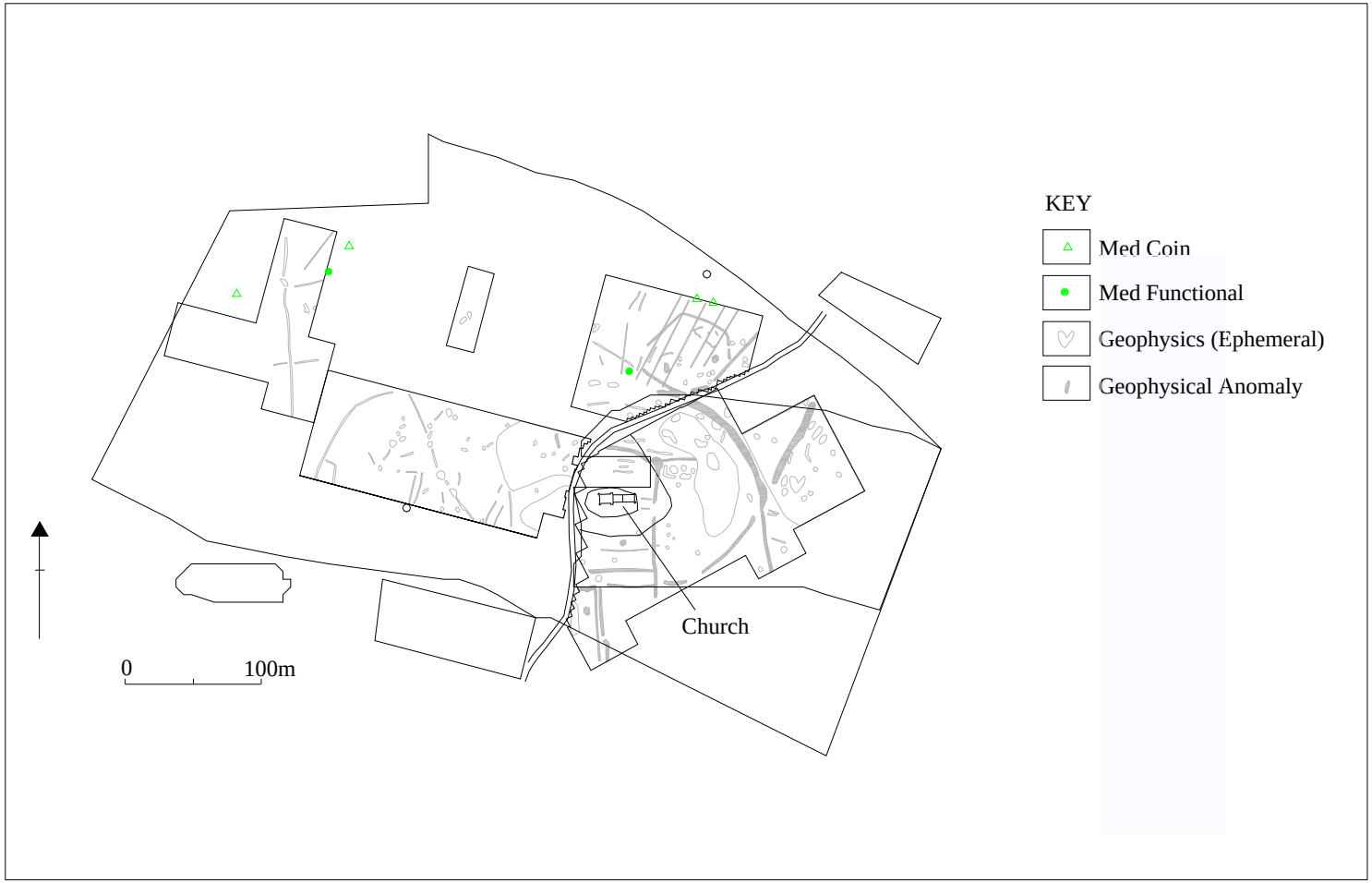



**Figure 162: Located Findspots of medieval metalwork at Bawsey (Unpublished HER data).**

**Figure 163: Selection of Middle Anglo-Saxon metalwork from Bawsey (from Reynolds, 1999).**

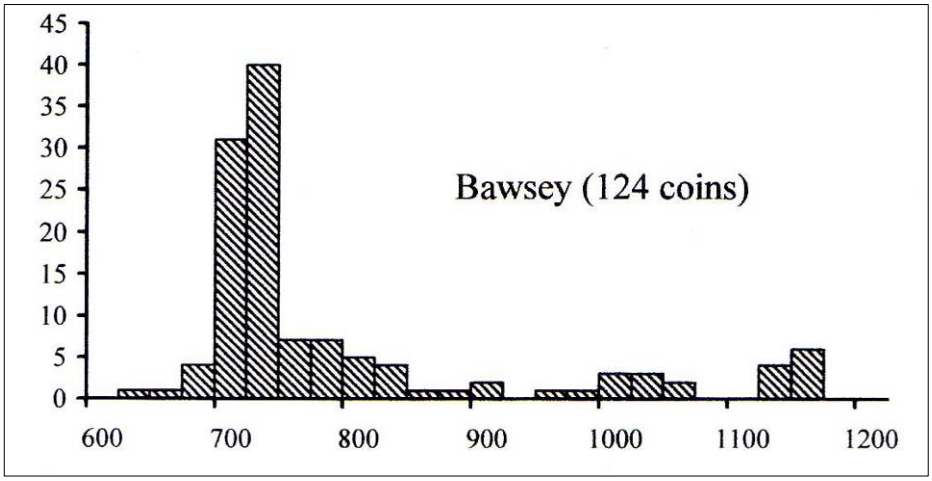



**Figure 164: Coin loss profile from Bawsey (number of coins by 25 year period) (after Blackburn 2003).**

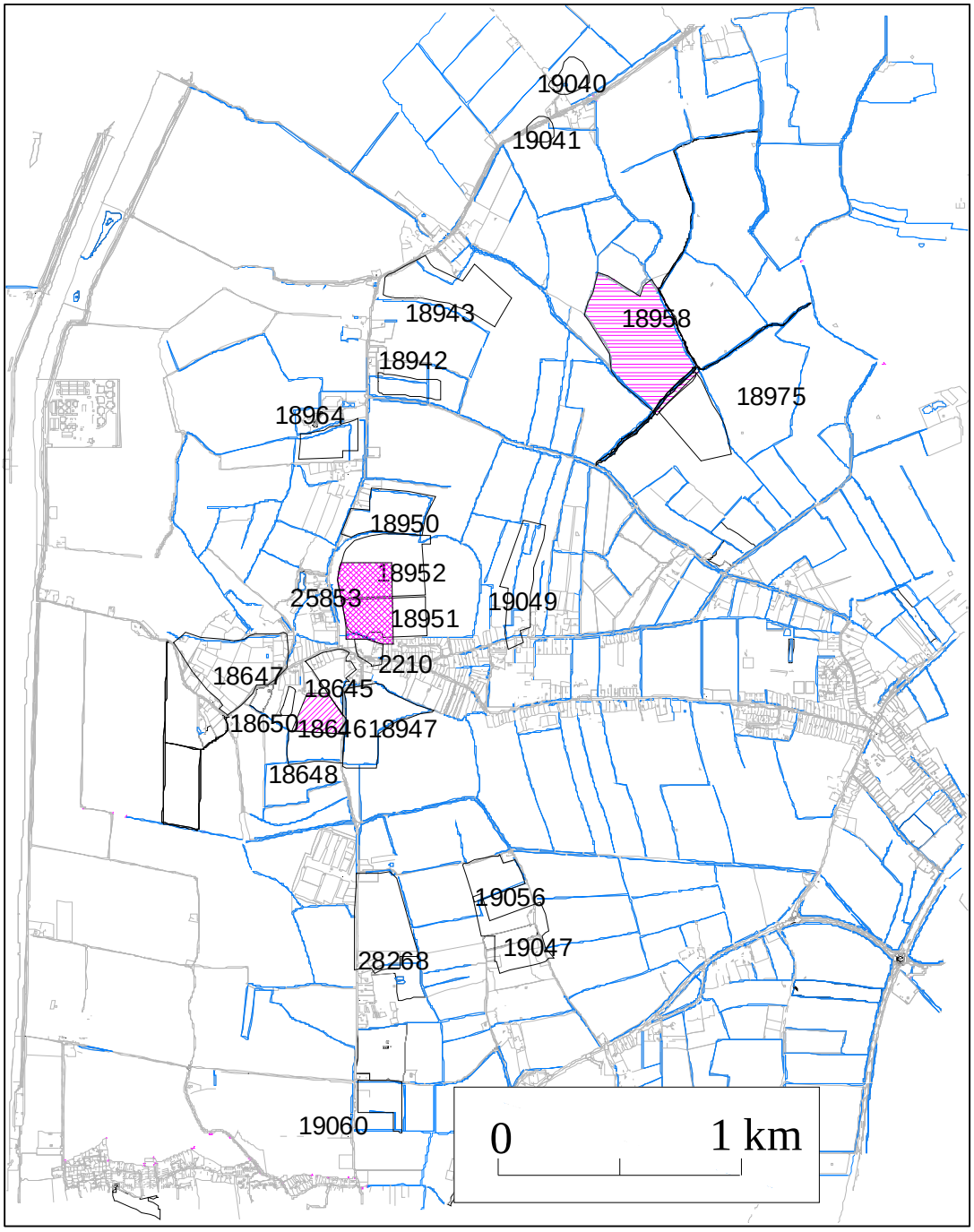



**Figure 165: Early Anglo-Saxon polygon analysis for West Walton (for full key see Figure. 69).** *© Crown Copyright/database right 2010. An Orndance Survey/EDINA supplied service.*

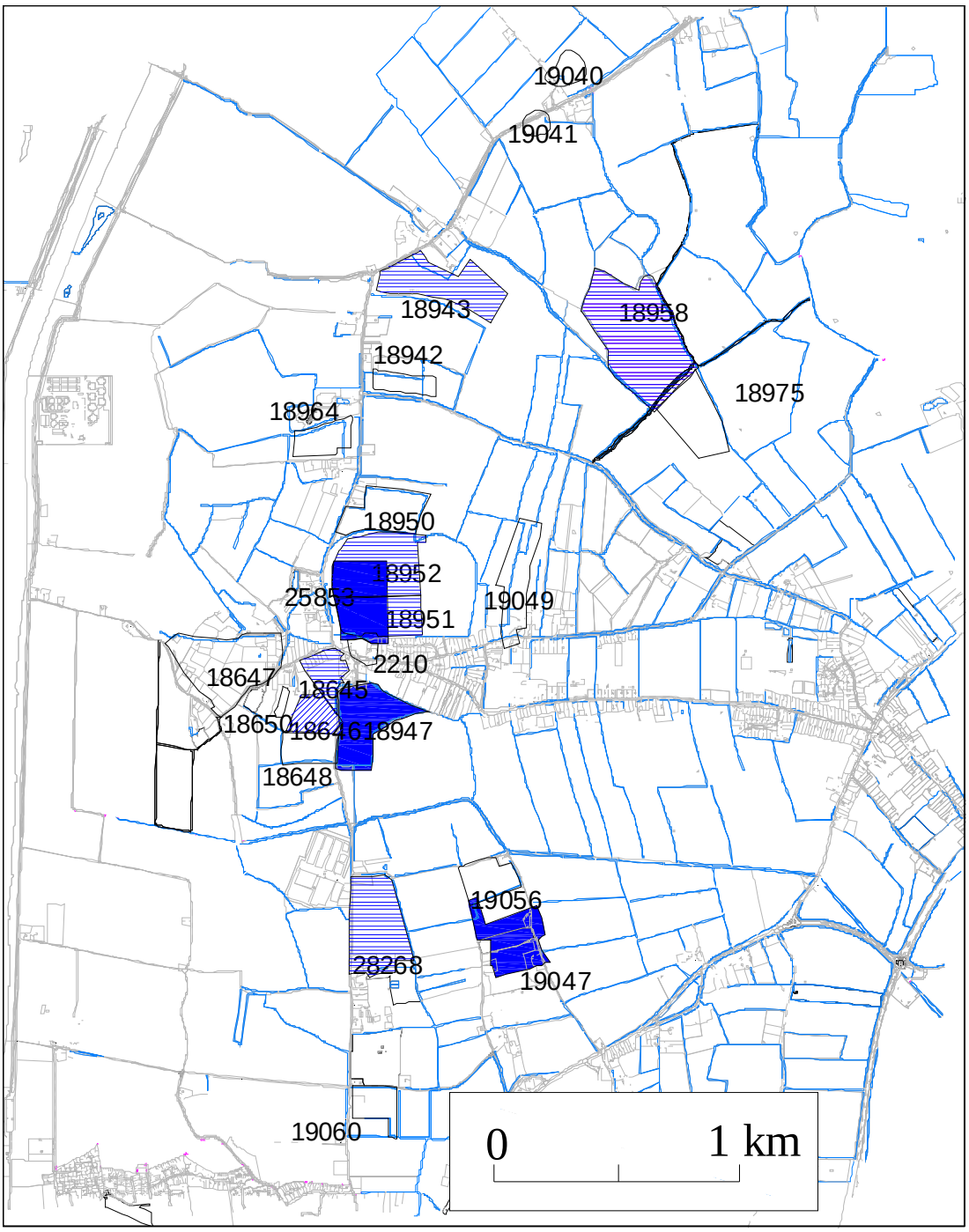



**Figure 166: Middle Anglo-Saxon polygon analysis for West Walton.** *© Crown Copyright/database right 2010. An Ordnance Survey/EDINA supplied service.*

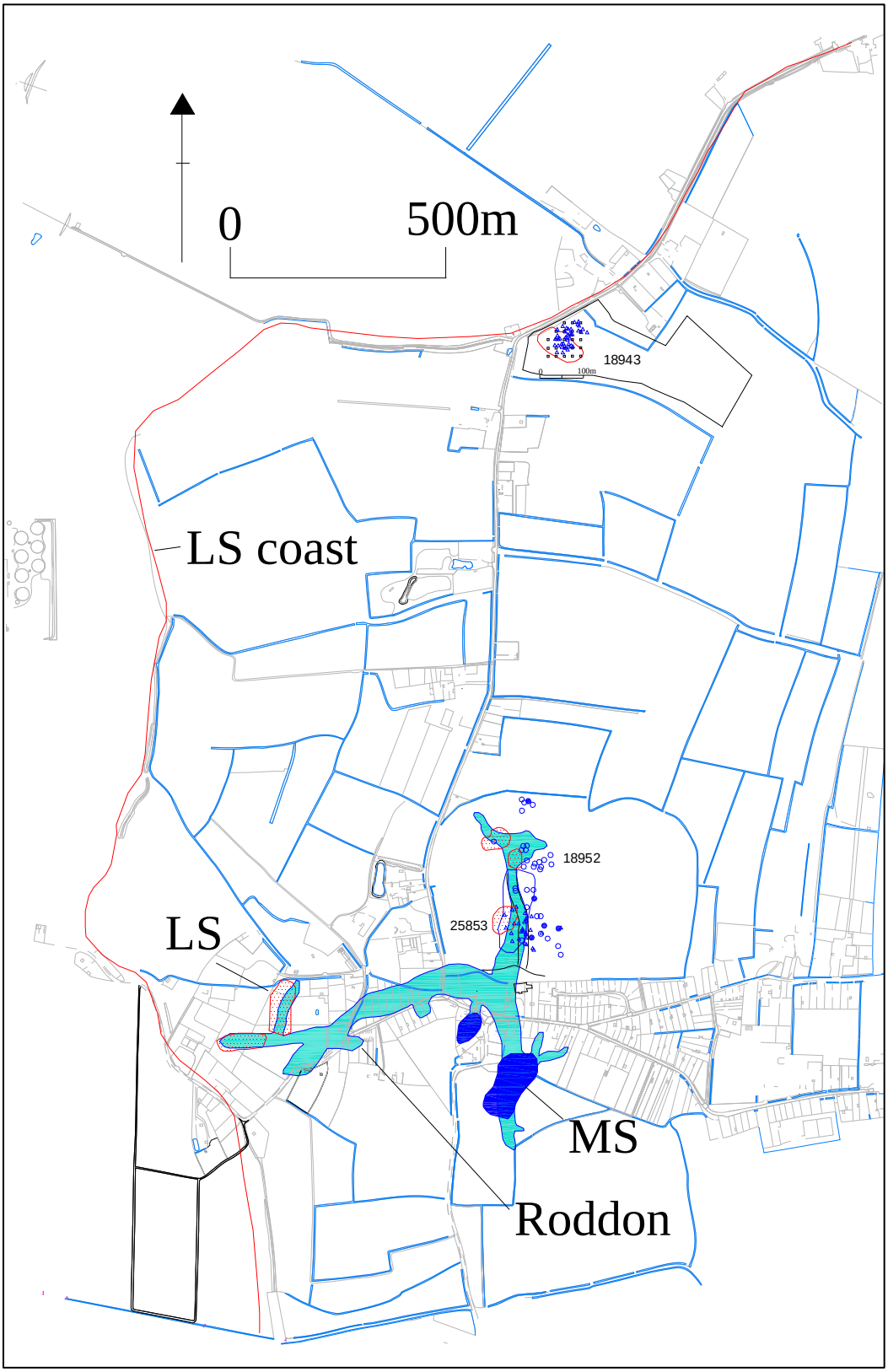



**Figure 167: West Walton, showing areas of detailed fieldwork.**

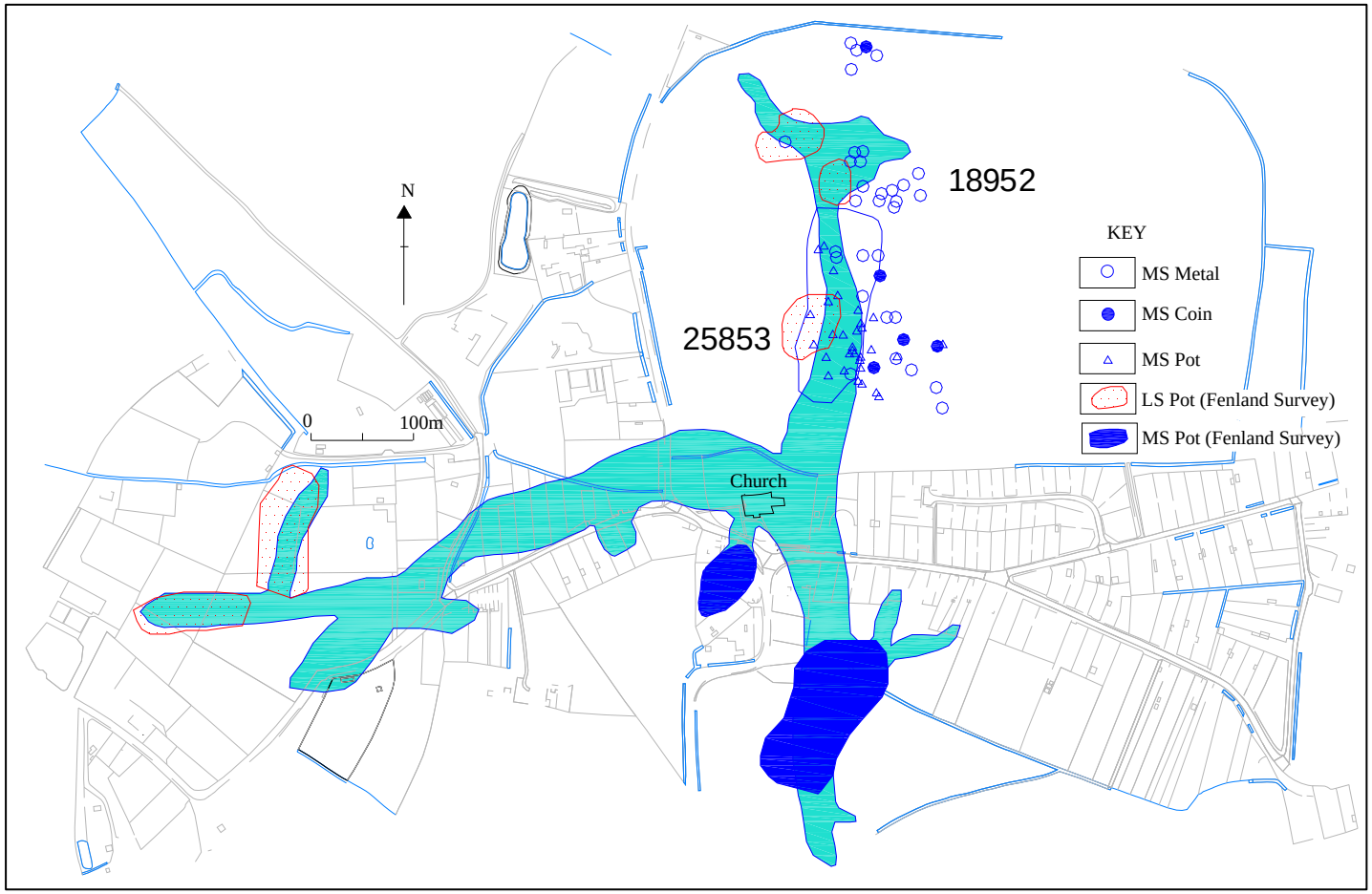



**Figure 168: NHER 25853/18952 at West Walton (adapted from Andrews, 1992, Silvester, 1988, and Unpublished NHER data (metalwork)).**

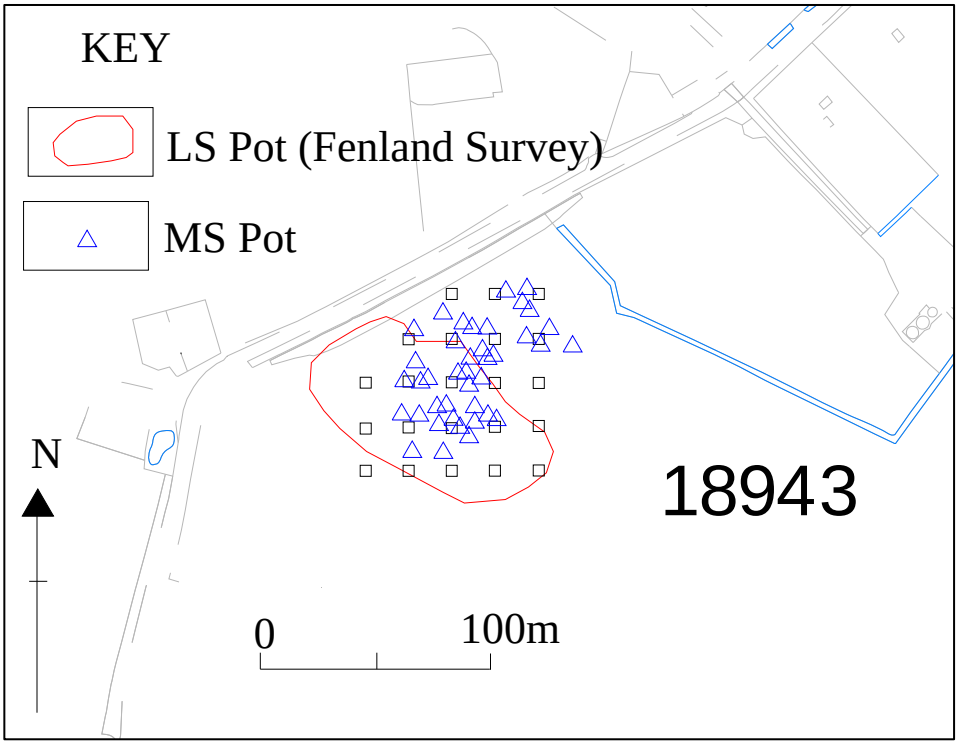



**Figure 169: West Walton, northern focus at Ingleborough (after Crowson, 2005) .**

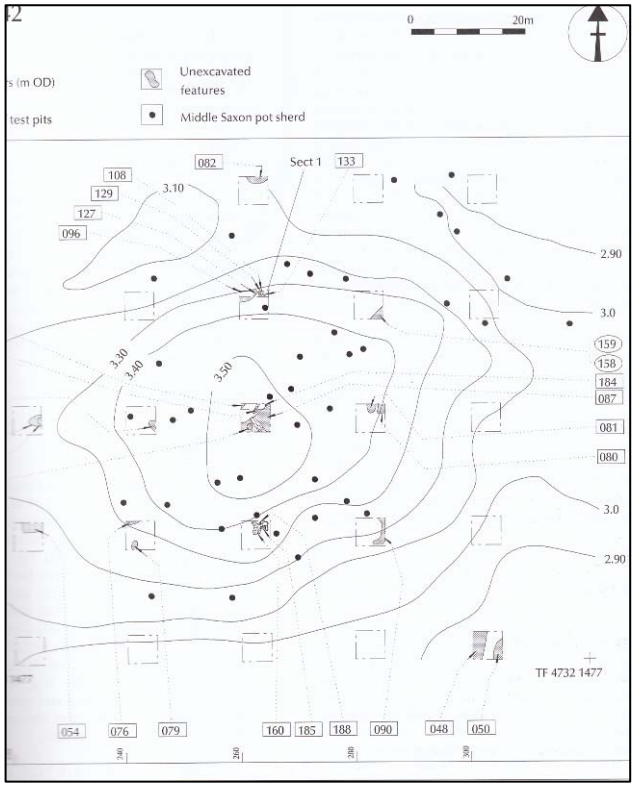



**Figure 170: West Walton, excavation at Ingleborough (after Crowson, 2005).**

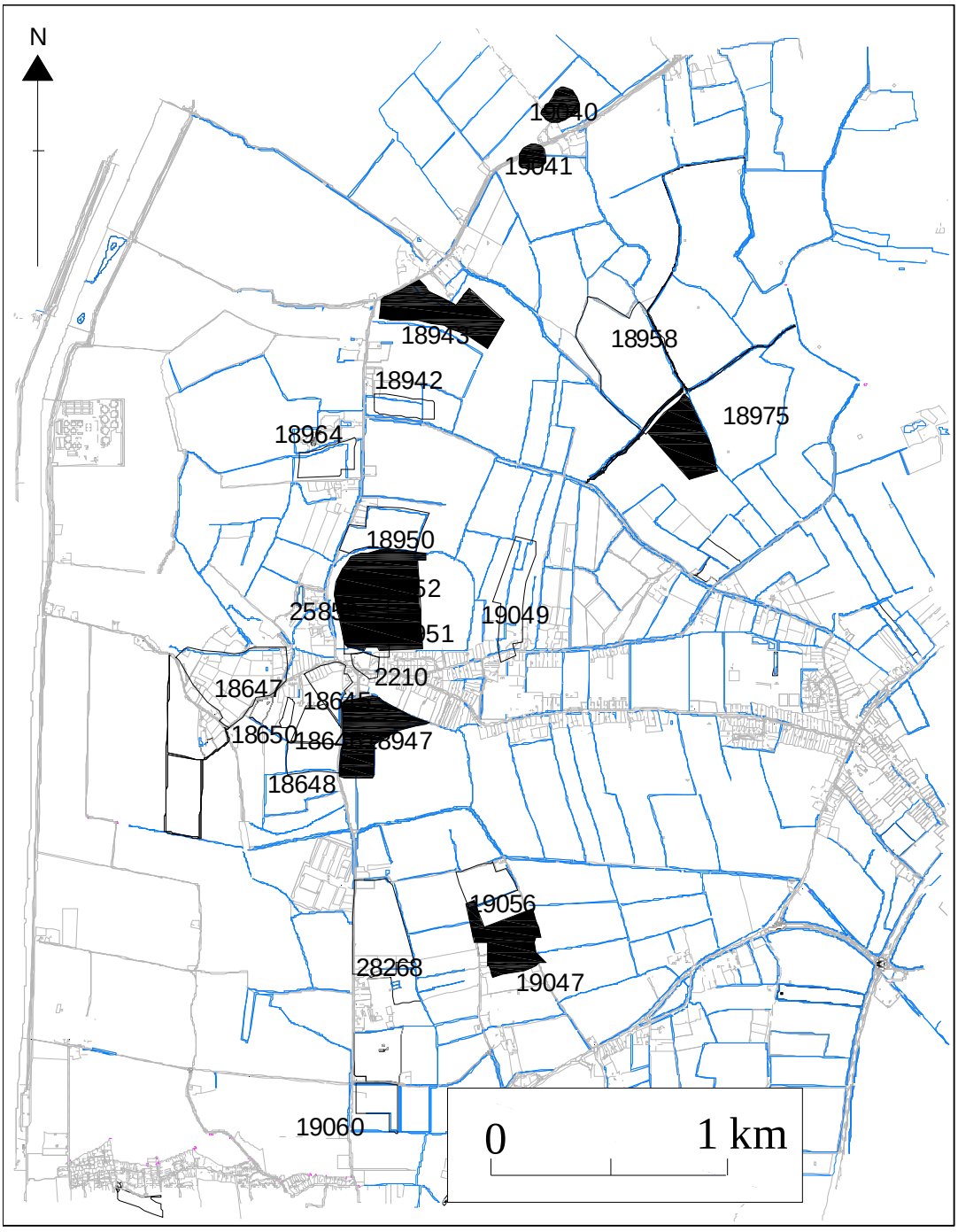



**Figure 171: Findspots of briquetage at West Walton (NHER data)**

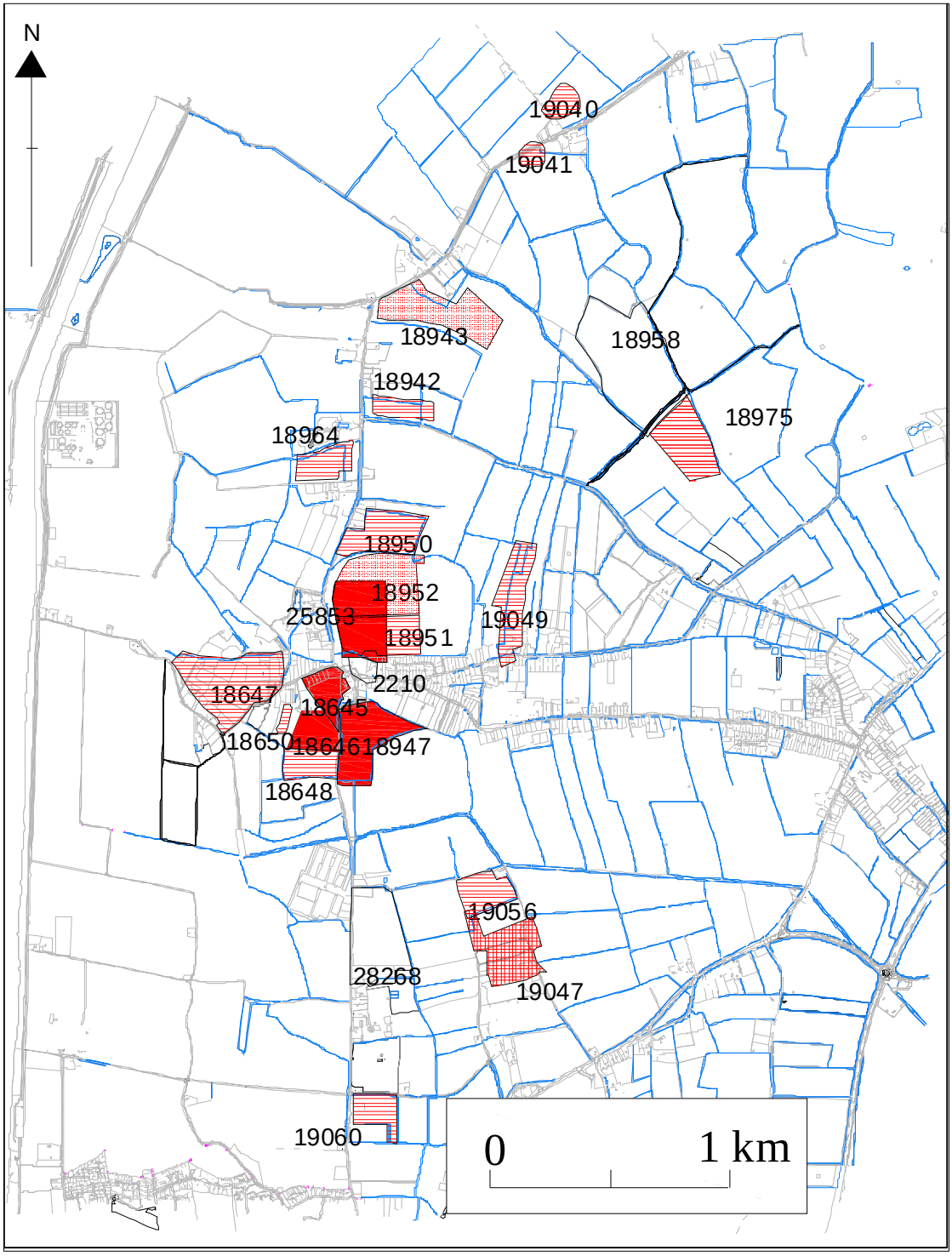



**Figure 172: Late Anglo-Saxon polygon analysis for West Walton.**

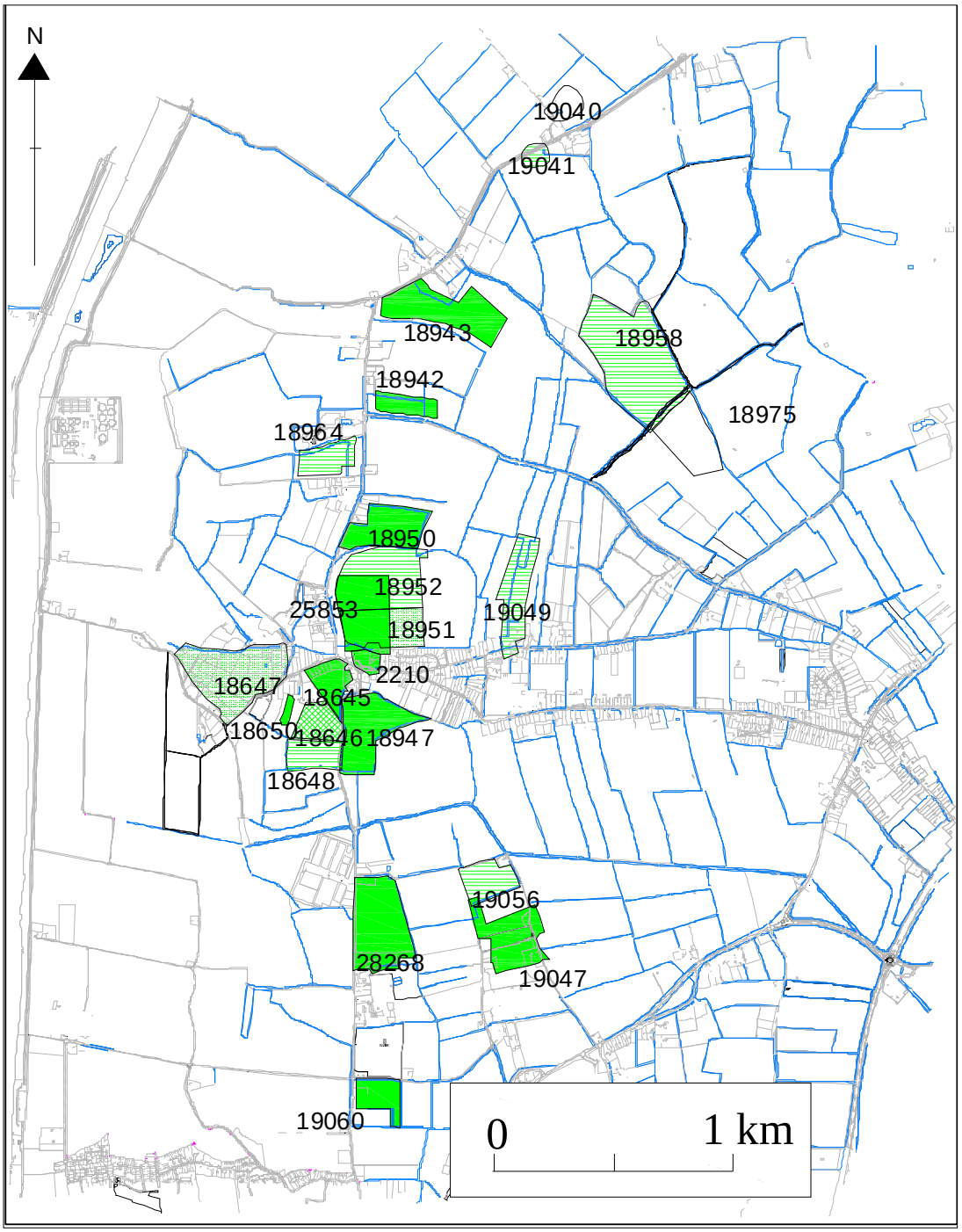



**Figure 173: Medieval polygon analysis for West Walton.**

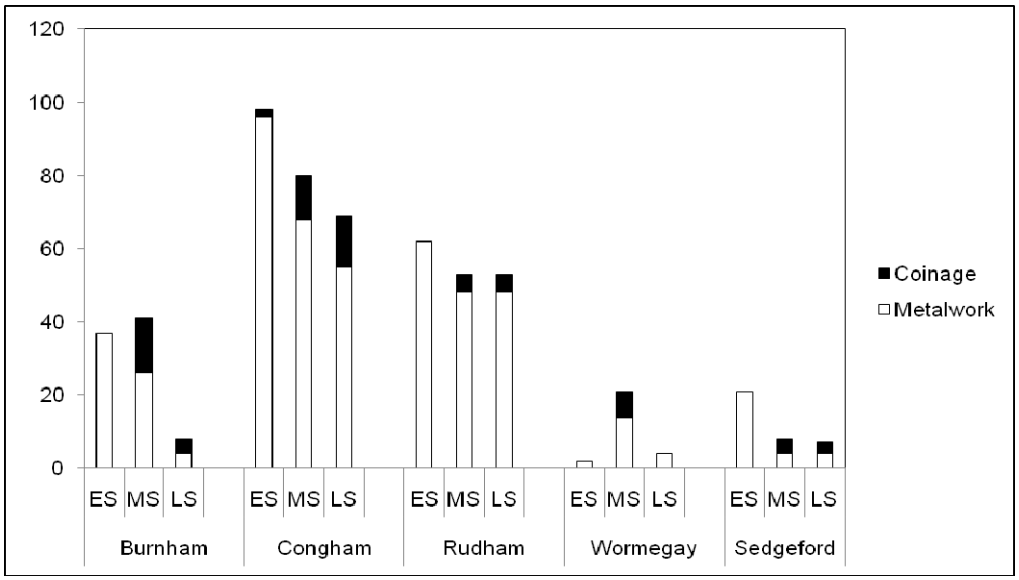



**Figure 174: Number of recorded findspots of metalwork and coinage by period from the five case-studies subjected to new fieldwork.**